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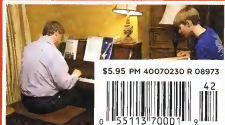
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EXCLUSIVE
PHOTOS AND INTERVIEW

STEPHEN HARPER

on the Beatles,
stage fright and
his big musical
debut p.28



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THIS WEEK

Interview

21 | **GENE SIMMONS**

Kate Fillion gets the experience of *Kiss* to tell all

Columns

14 | **PAUL WELLS**

Subtle changes to our Afghan strategy

18 | **BARBARA AMEL**

Roman Polanski: what's the big deal, anyway?

16 | **CAPITAL DIARY**

Michelle Ruppel on how Harper snuck off to the gale

Editorial

24 | **NEW MAIN TOWN**

Meet Obama's ambassador to Canada

28 | HARPER

An exclusive interview

32 | **MUSICAL MAKEOVER**

Stephen Harper's pursuit of the elusive charisma

World

54 | **LEGITIMATE CONCERN**

The U.S. should be focusing on Ahmadinejad's legitimacy

38 | **TARGET: CHICAGO**

Republicans blame the Windy City for everything

MACLEAN'S

VOLUME 122 NUMBER 46, OCTOBER 15, 2009 • SINCE 1905

25 | From the Editors 4 | Mail Bag
8 | Green Days 12 | Slowmovers

OCTOBER 19-26, 2009

THE BACK PAGES

116 | **Off the**

Roman Polanski's *Cherub* overshadowed his moral monies

120 | **Taste**

Homeside espresso that's no fool, no flake

121 | **TV**

Dump Enor takes in new twist

122 | **Books**

This year's best books may not be on the price lists

124 | **Help**

Can dropping out of high school be an entrepreneurial move?

128 | **Stage**

Samir Khouri takes Guiburno by the punchline—and they love it

128 | **Stays**

Is Michael Ignatieff free to speak on freedom of speech?

130 | **People**

The "Warrior's Brother" of Stephen Harper

130 | **The End**

Michael Mann's *Jok* 1992-2009

SUBSCRIBE TO MACLEAN'S AT
WWW.MACLEANS.CA

World (cont'd)

50 | **ALZHEIMER AT RISK**

Alzheimer's in Tanzania: Seniors could education the far left issue in Germany

Business

40 | **MEETING**

The day the global economy started to turn around

48 | **CANWEST COLLAPSE**

Let's not rush to judge Leonard Asper

58 | **ECONOMYWATCH**

Latest news on the economy

64 | **YOUR FAVORITE**

Canada's Top 100 Employers

76 | **BEST OF THE BEST**

Looking out for employees even in tough times

80 | **THE LIST**

Canada's Top 100 Employers

90 | **ATTRACTING TALENT**

Corporate culture matters more than money for many

94 | **WAR FOR WORKERS**

How can the private sector match the public sector?

100 | **PRAR FACTOR**

Do employees afraid of losing their jobs perform better?

Society

102 | **GRAND PEO**

The plight of the ginger-haired darts back centuries



POLANSKI'S CASE is not a dispute. Hollywood doesn't remember (yet) saved by the same rule as other folk. Common sense disagrees

Why Roman Polanski belongs in prison

On one side stands one of cinema's most accomplished movie directors: Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese, John Landis, David Lynch, Wes Anderson, Terry Gilliam, Pedro Almodóvar, Jonathan Demme, Costa Gavras, Jean-Jacques Annaud.

On the other side, a much shorter list: just two and common sense.

The recent arrest of Roman Polanski, the celebrated Polish-born movie director who pleaded guilty in 1978 to having slept with a 13-year-old girl, and has been a fugitive ever since, has become a strangely polarizing event.

The artistic elite, as well as many high profile American politicians and members of the media, appear to believe a lifetime of achieved work can be a mitigating factor in the application of justice.

French Culture Minister Frédéric Mitterrand denounced the arrest in Zürich as "shocking and horrifying" and claimed it threatened "a side of America which is impracticable." Rudolph Giuliani, the Polish-Speaking mayor, demanded immediate clemency for his country's famous son.

In case of the movie became defenses of Polanski, comedian Whoopi Goldberg appeared on the daytime television show

The View to argue the movie-maker's actions fell into a grey area of legality. "I know it wasn't rape-rage. It was something else but I don't believe it was rape-rage."

Finally a legion of famous directors and artists, a lot of whom are listed above, signed a petition signed by French writers' union. The petition reads in part: "Roman Polanski is a French citizen, a recognized and internationally active, now facing extradition. This extradition, if it takes place, will be heavy on conscience and will take away his freedoms." Which, of course, precisely the reason why everyone else thinks it ought to occur.

Polanski committed a crime in 1977. He admitted committing the crime. And it was certainly not an innocent capital case. On the eve of his sentencing, he fled the country and has lived as a fugitive from justice ever since. That he has continued to make movies, with awards (including an Oscar for best director in 2003) and live a life of comparative luxury in Europe should not be commiserated as an exoneration of his original deed, regardless of how many of his peers sign a petition.

The quality of an artist's oeuvre can never be considered an excuse for criminal behavior. And Goldberg's protegee gradient of sexual assault, in which a 44-year-old man

having received a 15-year old girl despite her repeated protestations does not merit her critics for "rape-rage," is insulting to both women and men.

With credit, the French government has barely come to an opinion: "Roman Polanski is neither above nor beneath the law," said Luc Chade, the minister of national education who serves as the official spokesman for the French government. "We have a judicial procedure underway for a serious offense, the rape of a minor, on which the American and Swiss legal systems are doing their job."

As for the culture minister's initial remarks? "Frederic Mitterrand was speaking from the heart," Chade added. The Polish prime minister has similarly qualified his foreign minister's position on convicted exiles.

But the artistic community remains unbowed in its defiance of Polanski. Because the one is not in dispute, it must be that Hollywood doesn't consider itself bound by the same rules as other folk. Justice and common sense would disagree.

In 1977 Polanski managed to take profits of 15-year-old *Satanstoe* film, an upcoming novel and actors, for *Voyage*. During their recent photo sessions, they ended up at Jack Nicholson's house.

In grand jury testimony provided two weeks after the incident and released to the public in 2003, Gully explained in excruciating detail—and in the unexcusable course of a 13-year old girl—how Polanski picked her up, changed and Quashed to get her naked, drunk and drugged. When the excited his advances in alcohol by taking an asthma

attack, Polanski's own lawyer told her to go to one of Nicholson's bedrooms.

In this scenario, however, testimony, Gully explains to Roger Canino, the deputy district attorney, who came next.

"Gassman: What happened when you sat down on the couch?"

Gully: He sat down beside me and asked me if I was okay.

Gassman: What did you say if anything?

Gully: I said, 'No'.

Gassman: What did he say?

Gully: He said, 'Well, you'll be better' And I got, 'No, I won't. I have to go home.'

Gassman: What happened then?

Gully: He reached over and kissed me And I was telling him, 'No, you know, I'm saying no' But I was kind of afraid of him because there was no one else there."

According to Gully's testimony, she said no to Polanski's advances for three times after which he raped her and she went home.

So perhaps Goldberg's observation that it wasn't "rape-rage" is correct after all. It was rape, rape and rape. And even then only a look at the bedroom door disturbed Polanski's electricity to allow the girl to leave.

So there's no question Polanski had sex with a minor. He pleaded guilty to this charge after pleading a bargain that would add additional charges denied, including rape by means of drugs.

Unable to deny his guilt, Polanski's supporters counter a variety of irrelevant arguments that he should be excused from the consequences of his actions. Polanski is "a great artist," argue said Jack Harvey Weinstein. "He's a great artist," argue said Jack Harvey Weinstein.

Polanski has served his time. Beyond the common liberal notion of autonomy in a "so-called crime." "You know it was long, Polanski did spend 42 days in jail, but this was a court order for sentencing observation period imposed by the California probation department in part of a process to the teenage if he should be considered a "sexually deviant or offender."

Polanski was especially aware that his long-standing defense would not come until after the probation report was completed. And the judge was under no obligation to accept any plea bargain. That's how the justice system works. For everyone.

A 2008 documentary *Roman Polanski: The Artist at the End of His Career* by

Wendell and Debraud showed Polanski had good reason to fear, as it portrayed in *Myra* evidence of his past sexual and financial past. But the lawyer who made the key claim in this regard has now recanted his allegations and now admits to lying to the filmmaker.

Other sympathizers, such as columnist Anne Applebaum of the *Washington Post*, consider Polanski's unique past, including another who died in a car crash, and the brutal murder of his wife, Sharon Tate, at the hands of Charles Manson's cult, to excuse enough to cut him a break. Besides, he writes on her blog, "He has paid for his crime in many, many ways in notoriety, in lawyers' fees, in emotional stigma." That lawyers' fees might be a calculated alternative may indeed be an interesting proposition for anyone accused of a crime. Applebaum, by the way, is married to the Polish foreign minister.

Then there's the fact that Gully, now Sarah in *Germany*, has publicly forgiven Polanski and suggested that he be released. Her family's medical son ends dated only with Polanski many years ago. In 1999 she said publicly that Polanski ought to be allowed to return to the U.S. "with

out the threat of never more spent at jail." She repeated these arguments more recently. While forgiveness of the sort is a noble sentiment, it means the point. In the law, justice system, it's not up to the victim to decide the punishment. Polanski's crime violated the standard of society, not simply those of the Gully family. His crime cannot simply be wiped away on her say-so.

Lastly, whatever the arguments of Polanski's sympathizers regarding his original crime, artistic output, sexual life or environment as the hands of philanthropy, it remains a fact that during the U.S. justice system he's a screw-up. As a fugitive from the law, he should have every expectation that he will be punished and eventually brought to justice. In other words, he would have to accept punishment, particularly wrong as artistic community that appears to consider itself exempt from law or morality.

There is no denying Polanski's genius as a filmmaker. His legacy of suspense and mystery among filmmakers are testament to that. But these professional skills were not enough to excuse his personal actions.

Society has an obligation to protect 13-year old girls from sexual predators, whether they make great movies or not. ■

MACLEAN'S

ARTISTS AND CREATORS

Music

Rock

Pop

Classical

Electronic

World

Opera

Comedy

Documentary

Animation

Visual Arts

Photography

Architecture

Design

Fashion

Food & Drink

Travel

Science & Technology

Health & Wellness

Business & Finance

Politics & Current Events

History & Culture

Environment & Nature

Education

Religion & Spirituality

Science Fiction & Fantasy

Horror & Thriller

Mystery & Crime

War & Conflict

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War

Biography

Autobiography

Non-Fiction

True Crime

Investigative Journalism

Documentary

History

Science

Technology

Health

Business

Politics

Environment

Education

Religion

Science Fiction

Horror

Mystery

War



'There is so much that Americans do not wish to understand about Canadian health care'

ULTIMATE HOCKEY FIGHT

JIM BALSHILL may be guilty of employing underhanded tactics in his pursuit of an NHL team. "Why Balshill went ballistic," *Business*, Oct. 1), but to suggest that he alone is guilty of this, while Gary Bettman and the NHL have behaved villainously, is ludicrous at best. *Savannah*, *Savannah*, *News*.

WHY DID Charlie Colles and Michael Frison leave off four pages with small print and not say a single word about a very central question: why are Bertman and the NHL brass so adamant in preventing money-losing American franchises from relocating to Canada? Thomas Ed. Edmonton

HERE IS A man who is passionate about the game, has deep pockets and is giving the struggling restaurant trade—especially those under Garry Berry—another dose of financial help. Belduc has the best offer on the table and a plan to cover the team in a viable manner. The Phoenix Coyotes have never been profitable and this isn't going to change. It's clear that Belduc doesn't work in the south east U.S. Belduc needs to let go of his aspirations for hockey there and focus on people who actually care about the sport. Just the fact that it's the cover story of *Macdonald's* should be a hint that we care.

SAUL SCHWARTZ, Lubbock, Tex.



each receive that, it's possible to pay the bills but a single owner has to pay the same property tax, car insurance, home insurance, etc. on a single income. Without pre-retirement plans it would be impossible to keep a cow going. There is no big discrepancy between those with company or public sector pensions and those without.

Annex was Arrogant Watson, Knoxville, N.J.

OTTAWA and the provinces systematically failed to accept their legal and constitutional responsibility to protect all employers' persons from harassment. Persons belong to the beneficiaries. Private corporate persons should be reverted to treat with complicity, mislead and total reservation from harassment.

Federal law must fully ensure that all persons shall have equal protection as "first-line creditors," before any financial institution. This is a national trust business and law reform.

undeniable, but often humorous and
thereby accessible. What a treat.
Deyna Martinez, *Edmonton*

PENSION TENSIONS

IF THE FEDERAL government plans to protect private pensions from bankruptcy companies ("Hanging out to dry," *National*, Oct. 5), perhaps they should take a look at what single women in Canada are receiving. Many of us get a combination of Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, and Canada Pension Plan, totaling \$17,000 or so. When two partners of a couple living together

the most preferential way and without any personal backing. Canadian company pension must carry tax-loss protection in those in the U.S. and U.S. The only alternative is the outright abolition of all company pension and a mandatory company payment into an employee's RRSP.

Robert Dorick, Vancouver

SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS

THE STUDENTS at Winfield High School in Plainsville, P.E.I., do not engage in actual strategy, that the principal is just fishing for an unrestricted access to students ("Group wants condoms in P.E.I. schools," *Maritime*, Oct. 5) I suspect, however, that the same thing goes on at Winfield as elsewhere in Canada. The cervical cancer vaccine is widely offered to young women to protect them from cancer. Like free condoms, it is designed for the protection of our youth, not to promote sexual activity. Some young people will have sex no matter what education the Winfield principal Dr. McNamee says.

Frederick Petricola, Cornwall, Alta.

OBAMA CARE

LYNN CH. BOWEN quotes one prominent Canadian saying, "National health care doesn't work just like America's" ("How Oshawa divided America's" World, Oct. 5). Canadians do not pay hundreds of dollars in insurance to cover medical expenses. There is some private health insurance, but it is not universal. Canadians who want medical service without it pay—and they wait. Usually they wait three months or so, as if we are happy and content with our health care system. We do not have to worry where to get money for medical bills. Yes, some states do have a waiting time—but in an emergency, somehow, these tests get done. As we get older, our prescription drugs are also covered. There is much to teach that Americans do not wish to understand about health care. Our critics in the American press are taking the wrong insurance companies and medical doctors for just extremely wealthy, but it is their choice.

B.E. Mc. Perth, Ont.

PRESIDENT OBAMA used great acuity, over-whelming support by a largely left-wing America media, and considerable wit. Each seemed to be victorious. During the campaign, Obama spoke of radically changing America and the redistribution of wealth.

These changes are now taking place. He socialized the auto industry, nearly did the same to the banks and will heavily tax wealthy Americans. He is now trying to fast-track health care plan as Americans. So much for his desire to dispense with partisan politics and doing business as usual. Obama has become an apologist to the world for past American aggression. His current indiscernibility as to whether to send more troops to Afghanistan and his inability to deal effectively with Iran shows total lack of leadership. Why American must be wondering when Obama will do it another attack 9/11 should occur.

Leanne Greenman, Chicago

IT AMazes ME how the Republicans in the U.S. supported former president George W. Bush, who cut taxes for the rich and increased the size of the deficit. Now that President

thing to the "Irac North strong and free" I
hope they're here, where it is safe, and raise
a generation of proud Canadians
Lower Mersey, Baltimore, Cal

YOU CALL THAT REVENGE?

DISAGREE WITH Adnan A. Khan's assertion that the Pakistanis are people's uprising, together with the Pakistanis military's response to the Pakistani Taliban, has resulted in revenge killings and war year headline calls "The driest war" (World, Sept. 28). It is all started with the Pakistani Taliban's reverting the country by killing people who don't have the same belief as them and killing people at random with their roadside and suicide bombs. So the Pakistan's military, together with other agencies who've taken up arms, responded with force. Khan calls this revenge. Accord- ing to Khan's definition, all the Maoists

ness about itself, but the area made it appear that anyone who collects was a member of the Third Reich period in a Nazi Germany Nazi era. Some have collected for decades for years and in my collection I have items from this period. There are hundreds of thousands like me who enjoy this hobby and it is a big business worldwide. The most important collectors are not politically motivated and simply like the historical aspect of acquiring their items. Please do not sweep all of us under the bush of antisemitism or socialism when most are just normal hobbyists with a harmless passion for history.

Glen Davis, Carolyn Price, Don

[illegible]

Obama wants to make real change, these hypocrites appear almost every constructive proposed policy and label it as Marxist. Pro mass health care reform attempts have been shot down through powerful insurance company lobbyists. Any president who attempts real change is destined to failure unless the collective mindset of the U.S. changes. David Hoffman, New Westminster, B.C.

HUMAN RIGHTS HEROISM

(N)OVA COMMENT/Book excerpts in MacLachlan about Lu Decheng's extraordinary story of human rights violation in China is a story of heroism! "The man who threw egg on Mike, Bookin, Ger 5) I hope the end of the story is that De cheng, his family, and his "private sponsors in Calgary, some of them involved in Chinese pro-democracy movements abroad, are living a happy life, working and creating."

such movements led by ordinary citizens in occupied countries could also be termed *revolte*. The principle behind the combined Pakistani military and civilian response to the Pakistani Taliban is no different than any other country's response to invading armies of any past war in history. If we weren't for this response to combat the barbaric Taliban, then foreign troops would have to help out in Pakistan, just like in Afghanistan and Iraq. Is that what we want?

COLLECTIBLE CONCERNS

THE ARTICLE about Alan Garlano of Human Rights Watch, who is being "exposed" for collecting Nazi memorabilia ("Nazi scandal hit human rights group," *World*, Oct. 3), makes a wrong assumption. Certainly his bias can be called into question, as can

God created life, and then in part of the creation He set evolution in motion. He created additional life in the sea, and the cre- ated mankind too in the library of the uni- verse. Whether that happened 10,000 years ago is not important to me. I look upon the opening verses of the Bible as an allegorical story, helping us to understand how God went about creating. God speaking the universe into being—"Let there be light"—is a beautiful poetic way of introducing the big bang theory. Light for modern man was capable of coming up with the idea. As for the asser- tion that labored children of plagues from the Christian era, the first five books of the Christian Bible are the Torah of the Jewish faith and are regarded as Holy Scripture by Muslims—seeing as they are also sons of Abrah- am. All three of these major faiths have the same common story, an epic of discovery.

From the other. Perhaps Richard Dawkins's problem is that "your God is too small," as former prime C.S. Lewis once wrote (*New Leader*, Newsweek, Oct.).

RICHARD DAWKINS gives himself away when he says, in the end of his interview, "My main global purpose is a basic agnostic religion."

Anyone who disagrees with him is a "harsh deceiver" comparable to a Holocaust denier and anyone who promulgates an opposing viewpoint is denigrated as "antisemitic." I just got Maclean's interview Franco S. Calton, author of *The Language of God*, who overcame the mapping of the human genome. He's been appointed by President Obama as the director of the National Institute of Health and in 2009 founded the BioLogos Foundation. He's debated Dawkins without any effect, because Dawkins is not interested in any facts or evidence contrary to his own ideas—or, should I say, his own religion. *Alan Aldrich & Thomas, Oct.*

EXPECTANT ELECTORATE

CONGRATULATIONS to Macdonald and CMC for encouraging me to think about the very nature of democracy ("Canal an democracy a broken", *Maclean's*, Sept. 25). I fear that we have done a great deal to make democracy a shell of itself by ensuring to be participatory and canceling out generally abusive voters on electoral officials a lot of sport. Only about five per cent of Canadian voters are involved in any political party, and perhaps fewer than that have ever attended a government house. We have even voted the effect of an elected official. The many of us have a 30 second sound bite or read a one paragraph article and proceed immediately to angry uncles of politicians. I hope that a non-partisan commission including all political parties could devote itself to a serious review of the nature of the electorate, its critical role in the political process beyond two minutes in a polling booth, and ultimately its successful engagement in Canada's political processes. A more thorough review might lead to a solid rationale for the role of the media and the role of the electorate during your period of debate, and the role of the



ELTON JOHN could start an agency that would provide real change in elections. Ever? *Bob Sutton, Guelph, Ont.*

WHEN CANADA promotes the establishment of democracy in other countries it is always emphasized that the governing party or the leader of that party must govern in the name of the "electorate" versus—and causing that the government is legitimately representing the majority of citizens. Why is it that we ourselves fail to uphold that standard? With rare exception, our country is governed by parties and politicians that have been elected by about two thirds of the electorate. Our first-past-the-post system ensures that it is almost impossible for a majority of the popular vote, and our major parties are not interested in changing the system by moving to a system of proportional representation. Yet, in Afghanistan, 5

we insist that if no candidate gets over 50 per cent of the vote that be a run-off election between the two leading candidates. As has happened that principle, every time someone would actually run and second choice on the ballot and redefining votes until a clear winner emerges. Thus we would know we are being led by a party that was actually put in place by a majority of Canadian voters. *Ottie Hayek, Kelowna, Alta.*

ANDREW COYNE suggests making voting mandatory. Voting is a privilege, a responsibility, an honour. Don't degrade it more than it already has been. More votes don't mean better democracy. There's my idea: voting because. A study guide to Canada and putting an essay on you for the home. Voting should know the basics of what makes the country tick, which industries dominate the various regions of the country, which regions are contributing, which need help and the state of the country's financial health. More on policy, planning, and vision and their respective long-term impact on the country that is, namely a candidate's latest policy proposal before the camera. The current system prevents voter laziness, ensuring for the current process, instead of getting informed about what really matters. My idea would get politicians focused on real issues instead of constant political pandering. If only 25 per cent of people voted, so what? We would get better decisions. *K.A. East, D'Arville, Alta.*

I LOVE THE idea of starting a national conversation on democracy, but surely democracy is about more than the shortcomings of a political system. At the heart of a true democracy is an educated and informed electorate. I suspect a more beneficial treatment of

the discussion would centre on social responsibility, Canadian education, and citizen challenges facing today's media. *Mark Bennett, Victoria*

THE PROBLEMS of democracy cannot all be laid at the feet of the voter or the formal institutions or the workings of politics. The problem also can be with us, the everyday citizens. Democracy is an ideal world exists when the people make legitimate, responsible, reasonable demands of their governments and governments then respond with legitimate, responsible, reasonable policies and interventions. A good democracy requires both good citizens and good governments. *Mary Davis, Mississauga, Ont.*

RAGS TO RICHES

HOW INTERESTING that Barbara Ansel doesn't pick up the phone and call her pal Elton John and David Bernick, who—in the documentary *Barbie's World* ("When Barbie finds out about...", *Opinion*, Oct. 5)—were denied the right to adopt a Ukrainian baby. Together they could bring enough money and clout to establish an agency that would provide real change in the lives of hundreds of orphans who are so in need of love and family. The days the two could devote a better future for these tragic social outcasts with a good social worker than providing them with substandard terms of services and education. A "personnel" friend in *Barbie's* might be Ansel's idea of the perfect family life, but I think her privilege and bias is showing in this sorry article, which has allowed her to once more remind us of her social standing. It is dismal that the couple's have written something positive about a gay couple making changes for the better. *David Ruscott, Bellevue, Ont.*

We welcome readers to submit letters to either letters@maclean.ca or to Maclean's, 11th floor, One Market Place, Toronto, Ont. M5X 1B7. Please supply your name, address and daytime phone number. Letters should be less than 300 words, and may be edited for space, style and clarity.

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THIS WEEK



A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF SAAAD HAGI MOHAMUD

The Canadian woman "snapped" in Kenya because of a prospect money may not be an innocent victim after all. According to a government affidavit released this week, the woman who arrived at Nairobi's airport carrying Mohamed's ID was not Mohamed at all—but her sister. The alleged suspect was "rogue and evasive," and could not provide basic information—including her son's birthday. On Sunday, Mohamed's lawyers vowed to press on with her \$2.5-million lawsuit.

Good news

Proof of life

It seems unlikely a released Afghan of kidnapped Israeli soldier Gadi Shalit, who spent in the footage holding a newspaper and delivering a message to his family. It is the first glimpse of the now 23-year-old since he was released from his post near the Gaza border in June 2006. Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter helped broker the deal, which saw Israel release 20 female Palestinian prisoners in exchange for the tape. Shalit's fate is a huge political issue in Israel, and is now something black to a renewed peace process. Hopefully, he's now closer to heading home.

First episode of new reality show *Band of the Week*, featuring female singers with clipped-out NHL players, attracted 1.95 million viewers—the network's biggest audience since the first episode of *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. Turn out hockey and figure skating go together like Muslims and Senegalese.

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Bad news

Judgment day

Another week, another blow to the Catholic Church. News Semelby (Raymond) Lehey named him in to Ottawa police after he was charged with possession of child pornography (border guard found "images of concern" on Lehey's laptop while performing a random search at Miramichi-Carleton International Airport). Parish priest in the diocese of Antigonish, where Lehey was known as a pillar of the community, were stunned by the

news "that frequent hand washing prevents the transmission of infections. The researchers, who focused their attention on health care workers, concluded that car washes and car washes are the only interventions "shown unequivocally to reduce the spread, and to mitigate the impact, of infections." It also would fit with the "avoid hand sanitizer" message. (The British Medical Journal has been diagnosed with H1N1.)

Virtual sniffles

Spending of last days, Ottawa has drawn an attention like never before. According to an internal memo that was leaked to a local blog, nearly 600 in 11 "hump" operations are looking off with coughs and colds every weekday, with the highest rates of absenteeism—surprise, our price on Fridays and Saturdays. To all those unexcused passers, there is a silver lining just be thankful you aren't try to catch a flu bug this week. The office was forced to cancel dozens of connections after the jobs completed to phone to act on the same day.

We're number four!

Canada's fourth best place to live, according to the United Nations' 2009 human development index. Norway, Australia and Ireland took home the gold, silver and bronze, respectively, according to the index, which measures the quality of life people can expect to enjoy (or not enjoy). Afghanistan came in at 181 out of 182 countries (based on where they live). Apparently, our true north and first (or) quite available as it was last year—Canada ranked third in the 2008 index (based on being Stephen Harper's son-out with Yo Yo Ma gives us a rough point to crack the top three next year.

Edgy programming

The CBC's *Canada's Next Top Model* is the focus of a copy sharing, discredited National Post (What business does it happen to be? A business that is a private sector enterprise, industry) from the *Shirley Corp.* also proved this week the value in focusing on core strengths—like hockey and figure skating. The

FACE OF THE WEEK



SO HAPPY: Barack's president, Let's make sure to see the 2008 Olympics in our own backyards.

ing job within six months of conviction or get another full year of classes free of charge. Vazquez-Torres, president of the university, says 97 per cent of graduates already find employment in their field of choice, and she is confident the new program will boost that figure to a perfect 100 per cent. Our advice to university officials: Live with it. All graduates to find their way to the Ontario Ministry of Health. According to a health report by the provincial and the general, the ministry can't seem to hire enough consultants these days.

revision—in were Catholics moved the world. Lehey, after all, as the same bishop who helped broker a \$15 million settlement for parishioners who claimed they were sexually abused by priests in the diocese.

Unclean hands

As health authorities brace for the second coming of swine flu, one piece of advice has remained constant: wash your hands. But does all that scrubbing really work? According to a newly released study commissioned by the Public Health Agency of Canada, there is actually "no evi-

Pass the Swiffer

To much for getting the doors Newswatch released this week confirmed that we're not in a new world of two worlds. We know all too well: the answer will do the bulk of the housework in Britain, a study found that females with jobs do most of the housework. In the United States, however, it's the males who do most of the housework. As for the U.S., a study revealed that by the age of 14, girls are raising more babies and vacationing more than their brothers. "Kids are really learning that girls do the housework," says Coauthor Gager, the study's lead author. "They're learning that that's fair." ■

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THE U.S. special representative in Afghanistan would like a Canadian on his team

A new turn in our Afghan strategy



PAUL WELLS

There is progress being made on Afghanistan, if you define "progress" narrowly enough. It has become harder to deny what is now the country's best chance, not war, but peace. Progress is being made.

Gov. Stanley McChrystal's Aug. 30 report to Barack Obama makes an important conceptual breakthrough: "Progress is hindered by the dual threat of a militant insurgency and a crisis of confidence in the [Afghan] government and the international coalition," the threat's top military commander writes. "To reverse that, we must protect the people from both of these threats." For McChrystal, a successful war, to force his enemy and his own side as parallel threats to an extraordinary situation.

It follows that a will do no good for "the international coalition" to claim up its act if the Afghan government doesn't follow suit. "The weakness of most institutions, militaries, is that they are not designed to resist the corruption and abuse of power by various officials, and ISAF's own errors, have given

Afghans little reason to support their government," McChrystal writes.

The senior election in Afghanistan was supposed to turn the page on corruption, abuse and illegality. In fact, the opposite. Peter Galbraith, the U.S. diplomat who had served as number two to the country's highest-ranking United Nations official, Kai Eide, was fired for speaking out about Hamid Karzai's attempt to use the election. Galbraith decided to go quietly. "For weeks, Eide had been denying or playing down the threat," he wrote in the *Washington Post*.

The highest-ranking Western soldier in Afghanistan says the preconditions for military success in a corrupt Afghan government. The highest-ranking Western soldier in Afghanistan is trying to halt the election's failure to produce a serious government. What next?

David Kilgallon, a prominent military adviser who died a year ago that this war was still "winnable, but only just," now suggests it is probably unwinnable. Without a runoff between Karzai and his main opponent, or an emergency national council to produce a coalition with broad support among the elite,

the Karzai regime's legitimacy will be hopelessly diminished. NATO's only choice then, Kilgallon writes, will be to "drain down troops and prepare to manage the inevitable human and economic disaster that will come when the Kabul government falls to the Taliban—which, in the absence of reform, is eventually and inevitably will."

Of course, Canada is in this up to its neck, even if Canadians are weary with the whole thing. And it's because we're in so deep that the Harper government finds itself justifying to implement a significant and unexpected change to an Afghan strategy.

Earlier this year there was an extended debate over whether Canada should appoint a special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. The question arose because Obama had named one. Richard Holbrooke, the veteran diplomat and fixer, had a mandate that would cover the two countries on either side of the Hindu Kush, and his reports would reach the new President's directly. Several countries scrambled to name their own Afghan-Pakistan special representatives. Japan, Germany and the United Kingdom were among those in the Commons. Liberal Bob Rae guided the Harper government for months in following suit. For months the government dismissed Rae and the whole idea. We have an ambassador in Kabul and a high commissioner in Islamabad, and what was Rae's problem? "This government has confidence in our foreign affairs professionals if the opposition does not," Junior Foreign Minister Peter Kent said one afternoon in March.

Then everything changed. Instead of the Liberals asking for an ambassador for Holbrooke, Holbrooke asked.

Maclean's has learned that the Harper government is on the verge of appointing a member of the Canadian government who will work as part of Holbrooke's Washington team. "Canada is currently considering potential candidates for an assignment in Mr. Holbrooke's office," Jamie Christoff, a Department of Foreign Affairs spokesman, wrote in an email.

"This contribution is being considered as we are partnering even more closely with the U.S. to deliver on critical governance, reconstruction and development work in Afghanistan."

Through as an intermediary, Holbrooke confirmed that he wants a Canadian in the office. He already has a British government representative, Jane Marriot, a career diplomat who served as speech writer to a former U.K. defence secretary. Holbrooke made his request directly to Lawrence Cannon, Canada's first ambassador to Afghanistan. "When I was down there [in Kabul], I got a couple of months ago, he suggested that we supply an individual to work

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MITCHEL RAPHAEL ON WHY THE PM WANTED HIS GUESTS TO LEAVE AND KENNEY'S NICKNAME

JOHN BAIRD WONDERED ABOUT THE PM'S OUTFIT

Before Stephen Harper surprised the audience at the National Arts Centre's gala fundraiser by playing the piano and singing a Beatles song, he was enjoying drinks at 24 Sussex with his wife, Laureen Harper, Transport Minister John Baird, and the PM's former head of communications Sandra Buckler. Baird didn't know the PM was attending the gala, let alone that he would be performing live. Baird, notes Mrs. Harper, while at the house "my husband was playing the piano—dressed in black like Johnny Cash—and John told me Sandra, 'He really should play one of these mono Sunders' agreed and it was the toughest moment of my life to keep my mouth shut." Baird did think it was odd that the PM was all in black and that he at one point opened the door himself and told them all to get going, getting into the way out. Baird would say something like "We aren't in a rush at all." As they left 24 Sussex, Mrs. Harper spotted the man that had the band in it. The musician and PM had played as a duo that they had heard over together, undercover, for the surprise.



STEPHEN HARPER at the piano at the National Arts Centre (top); (cards left) Carolyn Bessette; (centre right) Peter Milkan; (bottom) Libby Davies and Margaret Davies; (bottom) Lauren Harper at the NAC gala (left); Jason Kenney, a.k.a. the "Smiling Buddha"

U.S. SKIMPS ON THE WATER

Toronto Liberal MP Carolyn Bessette testified in front of the U.S. Senate. She was there to talk about why in Canada, at her words, "we pay less [for health care], live longer, and don't have as many infants die in their first year of life." The experience was quite like testifying in front of a Canadian Senate committee, she says. For example, in the U.S., Bessette was given a small bowl of water. In Canada, there are glasses and pitchers. "I'm a big water drinker,"

notes Bessette, who had caught her appetite during her testimony because of the small amount made available. She also periodically forgot to turn her microphone on and off during committee hearings. Bessette had to explain to the Americans that Canada has a publicly funded health insurance system "and not a self-insured one" (that) as a family doctor I was not a public servant."

After testifying, she was taken to the U.S. Senate dining room for lunch, where she had some "pretty delicious crab cakes."

BUT SHE WORE IT JUST FOR JACKIE

When NDP MP Libby Davies's mother, Margaret Davies, was in Ottawa recently, she sat in a question period and was shocked when she was told to answer her best. "It's like asking me to remove my knickers," says the

89-year-old, who won a Morse code award in England during the Second World War. The senior Ms. Davies has attended many question periods and this was the first time she had been asked to remove her hat. The best is her signature look. She wore a special red one, she says, junior NDP Leader Jack Layton because he always sees her in that colour. Margaret Davies is a big fan of CPAC. "Words can grow in the garden. The pot can be over 1 inch CMG." One of her favourite MPs to watch is Liberal Wayne Easter: "he has a bit of an Irish accent."

THIS SPEAKER MAKES HISTORY

On Monday, Oct. 12, Peter Milliken will become Canada's longest-serving Speaker of the House. (Even if an election is called before that date, he will be speaker and a new one is selected.) The second longest serving Speaker is Lucien Lamoureux, who held the office from 1966 to 1976. According to the current Speaker's office, Lamoureux was the person who changed the rules for who got hired to House guests—it used to be underprivileged 10- and 11-year-olds, now it's first year university students.

HAPPY KENNEY

No sign of Immigration Minister Jason Kenney at any official China name 60 government celebrations. (The Tory is staunchly anti-Communist.) But Kenney is popular in Chinese Canadian events and happy to talk to them. So happy people in the community have taken to referring to him as "Smiling Buddha." ■

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Pr: Nor do I want to, because I don't want to be the popular in jail. That was a joke.

Al: But I've seen you walk into a party and walk out with his girlfriend.

Q: Why? What's your magical appeal?

A: Power. By which I mean charisma, inner strength. It's nothing to do with power. You can be really good-looking but then you're just referred to as having the right genes.

Q: You've lived with Shannon Duff for 26 years, and you've slept with a lot of women—4,000 was the figure in one of your books, but that was a few years back.

A: It's more or less. Where we first got together, I showed Shannon photos. She was not a big fan of it, but what? Welcome to earth.

Q: Why do you think she stays with you?

A: Well, that's a good question. But I've only had three relationships in my life.

Q: The other two were Cher and Cherie Ross.

A: And we're friends and stay connected. I think it's because that women and men treat each other worse than we treat our pets. It's love or hate. When you're in love and last with each other, everything's okay. If love at last disappears, everybody sees each other, hates each other, it's Jon and Kate [Gosselin]. If you were sister lovers, why can't you at least be friends?

Q: You're currently touring with Kim. Do girls line up at the stage door every night?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: Aren't you too horny after a while?

A: Well, you're a woman, so you don't understand the psyche. It's like a vegetarian asking a carnivore, "What's the big deal with meat?" Look, you only sleep two eggs a month, and in your middle years you stop dropping them completely. We ejaculate hundreds of millions of sperm every day. We even make sperm after we're dead.

Q: If you're saying it's a biological imperative to sleep with groups—

A: A biological urge. The urge to mate.

Q: Then why stay with Shannon?

A: This is the hottest woman on earth. And she's an alpha female. She doesn't talk about whether the vacuum cleaner works or not. Doesn't sweat the small stuff. Has a strong moral center, no drugs, no booze. No whoring. No bad hair days.

Q: Is it okay if she sleeps with other men?

A: People will do whatever they want to do. So it's best to just ride and hope for the best. Get a hobby.

Q: It's clear to me that she just jades into their mother every night. Does it bother them that you're not a teenager?

A: Who said I'm not?

Q: Well, you do. Don't you?

A: No, not necessarily. And I'm not sure Bill Clinton or anyone else should be talking about those sorts of strangers. Aren't you ever going to talk me about this?

Q: Why are you still alive?

A: Look, it's the last century, and the thing women have been demanding for is finally upon us: you've free. You're no longer indentured slaves. You no longer have to be in the kitchen, or leave the smoking room to the men can talk. And the greatest asset Shannon has is that she's a modern woman. Besides being stunning, sex hot and, of course, a Neffie, I worship the ground she walks on. But part of the relationship is that it's an economic. We don't call each other "honey" and "sweetheart" and all those clichés. That's television talk, just a pain in the ass. I'm a relationship. When I talk to her, it's straight ahead like an equal partner, and she to me.

Q: A tape surfaced on the Internet last year of you having sex with another woman. Were your kids upset?

A: We talked about it a little bit, but they understand. It was made a long time ago, and not with any consent. But... move on. Why do people care?

Q: How do you talk to your daughter about all this?

A: Hopefully, the one thing I gave Sophie was the clear impression that she should never define herself by me. Women's magazines are ego-destroying; the worse piece of trash you can read. Here's why they feed the insecurities and misgivings of women: There are things like "10 things he likes about you," "10 things to look younger"—this endless self-torture. Men's magazines never, ever talk about what women want. Men don't care.

Q: So would it bother you if she said, "The going is to be like you. Dad, and have thousands of sexual partners?"

A: Once Sophie becomes a mature woman, it doesn't matter what we think or say; she will be deciding what to make and live with. But of course there's a double standard.

Q: Okay. But you have a new album out this week, a massive one, and your own reality show is a hit. How many thousands of Rice fans are there now?

A: More than 1,000. After *Sex & Drugs* comes out, every Will-Martin in North America, and soon the world, will have four Rice women, where you can buy T-shirts, Rice Mr. Panto Hunch, and of course Rice MBMs with our faces on each MSM.

Q: How is it that 25 years after your first album, you're bigger than ever?

A: I love the ground of the country I landed in, the United States of America. In particular, our states, or religious states, or even in Europe, there are limitations, cultural and in other ways. The same guy, me, with the same talent and ambition, in Iran or Africa—wouldn't work. So it's the right thing at the right time in the right place, and the rest of it is luck and a hard work. I approach every thing I do as if it's the only chance I will ever be given and the alternative is complete frustration.

Q: New Wikipedia entry says, "While Kim was young, her mother's long absence while working her job in order to make ends meet caused a scandalous period in a very short time." Is that accurate?

A: I would urge all kids to see a single parent who not only provides but is thankful for the opportunity to provide. Emotional scars? That's a point of view, not a fact. The person who wrote that is going to be sleeping with next week. It's a crime that Wikipedia lets



'If my daughter came home high or drunk, she'd find her Beverly Hills butt in the desert in a work camp'

anyone go to and after information.

Q: Does being so fat get the way you thought it would?

A: I don't mean that to sound cornball, but I don't really celebrate birthdays. I mean, yes, I eat cake—God help me, do I eat cake—but I celebrate every day I have ground in the best holiday there is. I don't visit for the calendar so will me to celebrate. But I will tell you that it's surprising how fantastic it is.

Q: What's so serious about it?

A: I'm the king of the world. Are you kidding? ■

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OBAMA'S MAN IN OTTAWA

David Jacobson is a former litigator with a soft spot for cigars

BY LIZIA CH. RAVAGE • Barack Obama's new ambassador to Canada, who has arrived in the midst of tensions over trade, energy and the border, has a reputation for embodying the "no drama" rule that was emblematic of the Obama campaign. In the course of 30 years as a corporate litigator with a single Chicago firm, David Jacobson was known for never losing his temper, not even making his voice. "David is an extraordinarily graceful individual," says John Gonsky, a colleague who has been in rough spots with Jacobson on high-stakes cases. "He never loses his cool." So it was an odd sight when his wife, Julie, an elegant brunette and fellow law school grad, walked in on him one day eight years ago, after the hard-fought 2000 presidential campaign that pitted George W. Bush against Al Gore, and caught him throwing a tantrum at the wall.

"I am one of those guys who is addicted to cable television. I read newspapers religiously and voraciously," says Jacobson, 55, who still seems a bit surprised to find himself and his wife on the pale yellow sofa in the stylish office residence in Ottawa's leafy Rockcliffe Park, hours after presenting his diplomatic credentials to Governor General Michaëlle Jean, enjoying a cordial private meeting with Stephen Harper, and emerging unscathed from his first Canadian media assault. "I would get mugged and mugged and lit up on newspapers around the room, and yell and scream at the TV," he continues, describing his reaction to the election results. "One day, Julie, who is much more mature than me, said to me, why don't you try and do something?"

He took his wife's advice. That "pivotal life moment" transformed the former political science major—who once worked on the presidential campaign of moderate Republican candidate Howard Baker—from a "dab hand" in politics into a fundraiser for national Democratic candidates. And one of such doggedness and relentless talent that he eventually became the number two money man in Belleville's operation that financed Obama's stunning ascent to the White House—showered money for getting people to fork over money to a politician. As for the former deputy finance chair of the Obama campaign, Jacobson does not apologize for his role in what some people call a "bribe ring."



THIS 2000 BUSH campaign turned Jacobson from a political "dab hand" into a player

"One thing I learned quickly in politics is that they don't need very many people to do politics, or to give speeches, or to do research," he says. "But they need a lot of people to raise money. It's the one thing ordinary people could do."

Having just arrived in the Canadian capital, Jacobson knows he has to settle into the job and speak only to friends about what he hopes to accomplish. But the first thing everyone in Ottawa wants to know about a

new U.S. ambassador is how well does he know the president and can he get him on the phone? Jacobson says he first met Obama, then as Illinois state senator, sometime in late 1993 or 1994, introduced over lunch by a mutual friend he decided to name. "He was incredibly impressive," he recalls. Jacobson supported Obama ("he convincingly won the U.S. Senate") in the early primaries for the last presidential campaign, he supported Joe Biden, now the vice president, but watched

him die at 86 in Obama's second term. The Obama camp reported that Jacobson personally raised between \$50,000 and \$100,000 for the campaign—a significant amount, but hardly as the top of Obama "handlers"—financiers who tap extensive personal and professional networks for individual donations. Asked about the figure, Jacobson explains simply, "It was not particularly important with credit" his job, as the deputy finance chairman (a volunteer position)—the number two in a committee of 500 people—was to organize and coordinate large fundraising functions.

He describes his personal relationship with Obama this way. "Was we friends? Are we buddies? I'm not sure. I think we are friendly. If I had to talk to him about something, I am confident that I could get him on the line. But you should understand that it should be something, very serious before someone picks up the phone and says, 'I need to talk to the President'."

After Obama's inauguration, Jacobson worked in the White House as a special assistant to the President in the office of presidential personnel—who staffs the roughly 4,000 so-called political appointments who serve at the pleasure of the President, from the secretary of state down to post office. "We would find appropriate people for the positions and make recommendations to the President, or he would say yes or no?" His White House job was longer (than expected), since the Senate took its time confirming Obama's appointees, including Jacobson. The other long wait was when he waited for his own confirmation as ambassador. Jacobson spent many months serving the White House while working from the inside. "There are a large number of people in the White House, very senior people, who I also know very, very well," he says. "Some from the campaign, some from before the campaign, who I could pick up the phone and call, seek their advice, seek their guidance, seek their counsel, provide a message from a Canadian government official, what have you." Likewise, Jacobson, who also worked on Democratic Senate campaigns, has made long-distance Capitol Hill—where many cross-border initiatives fester.

While Bush came under harsh criticism for appointing top campaign donors to Obama jobs across the government, Jacobson has done better, according to Craig Haddock, a congressional lobbyist for the Washington group Public Citizens. Better, that is, with the notable exception of ambassadorships, where donors continue to get paid postings. Obama's choice for the U.K., lawyer and investment banker Louis Susman, was named the "Vacuum Cleaner" because

of his skill sucking up cheques for Democratic cash donors. Northern Virginia contractor Donald Beyer, who raised half a million dollars for Obama, is headed to Switzerland. "It is disappointing to see the administration operating that way when it comes to ambassadorships," says Haddock. As for Jacobson, he said, "I'm not criticizing the process. He may be a line guy. But he's getting this position because he's a fundraiser, and that's not reproachable."

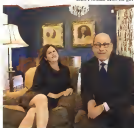
Jacobson, who clocks 18-year legal career has dealt with complex commercial litigation, mergers and acquisitions and cutting-edge securities law, with clients ranging from Allstate Insurance Company to Microsoft, rejects the

idea of a very proud of the fact that he was the first in his family to go to college. That's not to say he is a rags-to-riches tale. His grandfather had worked as a janitor in a retail store in Utah until the top boss noticed his talents, put him through law school, gave him a job and put him on the path to becoming one of Chicago's leading real estate attorneys. His mother had been a housewife, but with her sharp mind, organizational skills and scrupulously labelled shelves in the linen closet, Jacobson is convinced that, had she been born here, "she would have been chairman of the board of Exxon." His father had served in the U.S. Navy during the Second World War, and later started a garage-based

refill-and-cleaning-waxing business into a successful franchise. Jacobson spent most of his childhood in the well-kept Chicago suburb of Highland Park. Both his parents were "very conservative Republicans," he says. "Don't ask me why."

Jacobson set off to Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore to study political science and economics. "He didn't realize until he got

HOW WELL DOES HE KNOW THE PRESIDENT? 'ARE WE FRIENDS, ARE WE BUDDIES? I'M NOT SO SURE,' JACOBSON SAYS.



HIS WIFE, Julie, wants the embassy to be a cultural hub

there that it was not so all," interrupts Julie, while the ambassador's face turns red. At the start, Jacobson worked for the city of Baltimore, getting to know young local politicians who have since risen to powerful positions, such as the Democratic congressman Steny Hoyer, now the majority leader in the House of Representatives, and Ben Cardin, now a senator from Maryland. He earned a law degree from Georgetown University Law Center in Washington in 1976 and began practicing corporate law in New York City, before his

Jacobson grew up with two younger sisters,

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALBERTO RIVERO

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another became ill with cancer and he moved back to Chicago. What was intended as a temporary move became a three decade long career with Sonnenreiss Nash & Rosenthal LLP. It was there that he met his wife, then a student at New York University's law school, who had a summer job with the firm.

The young lawyer quickly earned a reputation as a technology fanatic, and in 1999 was organizing networks for Chicago's Internet start-ups and nascent technology companies. "I'm a geek," Jacobson happily admits. "When personal computers first came out, I used to stay up until 4 a.m. or 5 a.m. in the morning with desktops all over the floor, just because I wanted to understand it." Jeff Leonard, a former law partner, remembers him trying to find ways to use the newest technology in the courtroom. "I remember him designing complex visual graphics to explain how traffic patterns moved in a major rail merger we were opposing. It was hard to visualize and he found ways to use computer graphics in the days before PowerPoint."

This week, Jacobson and his wife are planning to kick off two weeks of travel across Canada. "I want to meet so many Canadians as I can and try to understand what they really think," he says. The goal is to visit all 10 provinces by the end of November. They are starting with a trip around Quebec, then heading out to the Prairies for 10 days, followed by a visit to British Columbia before ending out on the Atlantic provinces. "I'm trying to do as much of it as I can on the ground—by car or by train," he says, recalling a long ago road trip from New York to Los Angeles during which he "learned more about the United States than in hundreds of times flying over it." The North may be on the agenda for next summer.

Jacobson has heard Canadian complaints about border "thickening" and wants to see for himself. He notes that U.S. stimulus funding has all but dried up money for immigration to border infrastructure. "With regard to whether there are other things we can do, I want to reserve judgement," he says. "I want to see what's like for ordinary people—I'm not sure I will, honestly, because I am the U.S. ambassador. But I want to get as much information as I can. Our goal is to meet ordinary people, or increase costs, or destroy companies. Our goal is to protect our interests. I'm going to pay very close attention to see if there are things we can do to improve security or improve convenience. We can

probably do both."

The Jacobsons have a daughter, Wynne, 31, at the University of Colorado, and a son, Jeremy, 20, who is a first year student at McGill. Julie, who has worked on literary projects and set on literary boards, is already working on creating a borrowed art collection for the official residence, making use of a U.S. State Department program that enables missions to borrow some of the finest American art from U.S. collections. She says she has fallen in love with Canadian art, and has obtained special permission to create a small collection, half American, half Canadian. "I'm a whole new approach to art in embassies," says Julie, who has been working with the National Gallery in Ottawa and Chicago's Art Institute. She has her eye on works by the Group of Seven and Emily Carr, and on American landscape painters, including one particular Georgia O'Keeffe painting of Canada. And she was thrilled at the art she saw at Rideau Hall. "Everything there is fantastic." She envisions turning the residence, with its

raised chiefs and graving grounds and majestic views of the Ottawa River, into something of a cultural hub. "There are a lot of Canadian artists I admire. There are also Canadian musicians that I admire," she says, adding, "One of my greatest goals is to get it all long to our house."

As for Jacobson's prior travels, he talks in broad terms about his meeting orders from the White House. "Trade, energy, border, our respective national interests and the fact that we stand shoulder to shoulder and so continue that—those are the most important things I will have to address," he says. "And I am quite confident that there will be things I'll have to discuss on the way that I can't discuss yet."

In the meantime, he may also indulge in the occasional cigar. "I sold him I was just out since now he was moving to Canada he would have an endless supply of Cuban cigars," says Duane Quinn, former chair man of Sonnenreiss Nash & Rosenthal, who describes Jacobson as "the best ambassador I've ever known" and a "happy" person who litigated without resorting to threats. Quinn is planning to visit the Jacobsons in Ottawa, and says the new ambassador "promised me he'd have Cuban cigars on my arrival." Asked about this potential breach of the U.S. embargo against the Castro regime, Jacobson demonstrates he's getting the hang of the ambassadorial thing. "No comment," he says. ■

POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE

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with Tim Ferris

Weekly look at politics, business and the battle for public opinion.

11 AM ET/9 AM PT
THE WEEK
with Mark Surran

National pick up the week in minutes.

7 PM ET/6 PM PT
GOLDHAWK LIVE
with Dan Goldhawk

Predicts and the public to open 100-clubhouse.

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PRIME Minister Harper and family cross Abbey Road in London as the Beatles' famous did-for-an-album cover

HE GETS BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM HIS FRIENDS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper talks with Maclean's Editor-in-Chief Kenneth Whyte about the Beatles, stage fright and his musical debut

Q: I read somewhere that when you were a young musician you had a problem with your hands shaking. When you walked out on stage last Saturday at the National Arts Centre with No-Nu Ma and a big audience, were you a little bit nervous?

A: Well, can I tell you the whole story? It's true! I had that problem when I was young. It took place for 10 years. I got my Grade 9 Royal Conservatory. I had a lot of talent but never enough to think about it professionally. My big problem was that, while I didn't appear nervous, my hands shook, which obviously was fatal for any kind of pianist. I never did that well on my exams for that reason. Indirectly, this led to where I am now because at a very early age, almost from the first time I ever gave a public speech at school, I spoke without notes so nobody would notice I was nervous.

Q: You just kept your hands at your side or in your pockets or something?

A: Yeah. Or just put them on the podium. They didn't shake so bad that you'd notice it unless I was holding papers or something. So that was one fear. I haven't performed music in front of a crowd since I was probably 11 years old, so I was worried, "Jeez, will this



come back? Well I get the shakies?" But no I mean, I was nervous, don't get me wrong, but I didn't have any lead wrong. I was just a little bit! Now, the band had told me—when we were rehearsing, they said, "Look, if at any point you get uneasy about the piano part, or your leads, just sing. Nobody's going to care, just sing!" So that was the backup plan. But no, in the end my hands were okay.

Q: How often did you rehearse?
A: We did three or four hard rehearsals and then I did a little bit late at night every night, but as I said to Laureen, if we'd had another week I would have been able to play without concentrating as hard on what I was doing. I could have just performed and not worried about whether I was hitting the chords or the notes right. But that's all we had.

Q: What's your best memory of the performance, or the evening?

A: Probably just when we ended, and the great crowd reaction, and the sense of relief. I have to say that as we played I started to get into it after a bit, and the crowd was kind of right into it from the beginning, so

'LAUREEN CLAIMS I PLAY ALMOST EVERY DAY. THAT'S NOT TRUE, BUT PROBABLY EVERY OTHER DAY I PLAY.'

that all helped

Q: Well, you've been a politician for decades, and one who's always been criticized for not showing a softer or more human side—why did you want to live to break out this side?

A: You have to remember that after I got my Grade 8 Royal Conservatory, when I'd play I played the piano badly at all for almost 30 years. I only started to get back into it a bit when my son Ben started to pick up the guitar and he wanted me to accompany him, so I'd play a few chords. And then Roger Chapman knew, our house manager and a great musician, he would play guitar and fiddle at home

partner we would have, and I would sing with him. And over the last couple of years, it got bigger and bigger when we had other friends in who were singing. Friends of ours who played some instruments, and then my wife brought in these professional musicians (which me up at our at home jam sessions. And she kept saying, "Oh, you should perform some time," and I just said, "I'm not good enough." But then when she pushed me kind of in the lead-up to this event I thought, "Well, I'll bring my band over so when they think "So a sort of full-on thing, in the way way I'll fall into the whole job, with Laureen pushing me to do it and not shirking. "Well, you know, if people think we can pull it off, let's try. Otherwise I'll be looking back saying I wish I'd tried."

Q: You chose a Beatles song—With a Little Help From My Friends—and you've been a Beatles fan all your life. What's the attraction? Why the Beatles?

A: Well, of all, just on the song, we picked it for a bunch of reasons but the biggest was we only had a well, so we picked something that was catchy, fun, with my vocal range

but also not a lot of complicated beats or chord changes, and obviously it is the song who is but it's the classic melody knows you can sing song. That why? I mean, I'm just a huge fan of the Beatles, I always have been since I was small.

Q: From what I know of you've never named other things that you do, and I can't imagine you're a casual fan of the Beatles. You know quite a lot about them?

A: Yeah. I know about pop music than a lot of people think I do, but I know the Beatles inside out.

Q: What's your least favorite Beatles song?
A: Funny, I thought you might ask me that. Probably Revolution 9, because I don't really consider it a song. I agree it's an amazing piece of work. I don't really put it in the category of a song, so that would probably be my least favorite.

Q: As much?
A: You know, I've got so many I love, but probably in the end I'd say I love my favorite

Q: Why?

A: It's just a magnificent piece of work. It's a great tune, it is a great production, it's really uplifting. I'd say it's one of those perfect records, you know? There are a lot of great songs but there's only a handful of ones I'd say we're not absolutely perfect, that could not have been better. And that'd be one of them.

Q: The age-old question: Lennon or McCartney—who do you prefer?

A: Well, if forced to choose, I would say Lennon, but not a total analysis. It's that it's a combination. I think that's what everybody who has that argument is really saying, that the Beatles were, at the core, Lennon and McCartney, not Lennon plus McCartney as vice versa, but Lennon and McCartney together. And while both are great artists and musicians in their own right, they were never a good without the collaboration and the cooperation that created their special symbiotic relationship.

HARPER at the PM's country retreat at Strawberry Lake with his son Ben last New Year's Eve (facing page) and earlier this fall with friends, the family on a tour of Abbey Road Studios, a 60th birthday gift to the PM from Laureen, trying out the piano the Beatles used

Q: Lennon once said that if you're politician in the world were like Pierre Trudeau, it'd be world peace. What's your response to that?

A: You know, the funny thing is—most people wouldn't believe this—in a strange way I'm a big admirer of John Lennon but obviously I don't share his politics. Although, if you know much about John Lennon, his politics weren't quite as fixed as people think, his politics shifted around a fair bit. Look, I know that when a lot of politicians are saying they're trying to get a political message out. I'm a politician. When I'm singing I'm just singing. I got no political message.

Q: I know you like classic rock but do you like any music from the last 20 years?

A: I don't want to say anything trashing music from the last 20 years because it's not that I dislike it, I just probably haven't given much of a chance. Laureen actually likes to music a lot more than I do—I just don't have the time. But I will tend to like stuff in the rock vein. I loved the Alanis Morissette

album *Jagged Little Pill*, I said it: I like Mike Rodden. I like Michael.

Q. You play when you're at home, and I understand you play on the road sometimes if you can get a piano in your room. What do you play when you're by yourself?

A. It's almost always a series of Beatles tunes, a few other songs from classic rock, the '50s to '70s kind of era, the stuff that I know.

Q. How often are you able to play?

A. Laurence claims I play almost every day. That's true, but probably every other day I play an hour or so. I don't do scales or any practicing. I just sit down and feel around.

Q. What do you get out of it? How does it make you feel?

A. I've always had a kind of peculiar relationship with music. I love playing music in some ways, and I understand, I know, but I really get into it. I get lost in it. On the other hand, it isn't long before I start to get perfectionist about it and, you know, start to maybe... well, it's common less than relaxing.

Q. You've taken some heat as this political arena for speaking dismissively of fancy arts galas where artists take the stage to beg for higher subsidies. Was your performance at the National Arts Centre gala intended as some sort of gesture to the arts community? Was there a political message behind it?

A. Well, it certainly wasn't there to complain about my salary. No, look, I've never had anything but respect for artists. That's not the issue. It was just three stinging songs. As I said, it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, so I thought, "Well, while we're in this building, let's ride it."

Q. You're also a lot of other things over the years to show a non-political face, a more human dimension of yourself—everything from dipping penne into a bowl of spaghetti. Why do you think that particular performance has resonated the way it has?

A. As I've said, I'd probably have to go watch it. I haven't. I haven't shown myself on television and I love the security gone and watched it. If I just saw one to second clip and I'd appreciate the electricity in the room. We were surprised at the response, at how kind of easy it got. Obviously we thought people would notice, but get some coverage, but it's so much, much bigger than we expected. It was just a wonderful response.

Q. Why don't you take singing yourself on television?

A. I don't know. Maybe it's the performance in me. Also, I find it like an out-of-body experience. It's like watching somebody imagine. It makes me very uncomfortable. Maybe it's the side of my personality or something. But I don't want any Canadian news—I don't want to see myself on television. But I guess I'll watch this one. ■



ONE ENCHANTED EVENING: The PM with his hands at the NAC gala, including Yo-Yo Ma (above) Laurence Foster



PLAYING AGAINST TYPE

Was this a fluke, or the dawn of an era of a more human, more likeable Harper?

BY JOHN COCHRAN • It could have gone so badly. If Stephen Harper had hummed it up, he might have looked like a phony politician concealing a cheap publicity stunt. If he had, on the other hand, strayed from the moment, appeared too uncomfortable, then the episode might only have reminded Canadians that their Prime Minister isn't the easiest guy to warm up to. If he had chosen a harder song for his surprise appearance on stage at last Saturday's National Arts Centre gala, he might have looked as if he was trying to go some. Nobody likes a show-off.

But the Prime Minister fell into none of those traps. Instead, his rendition of "Let a Little Light from My Window"—Harper once paying himself as piano, with a trio of Ottawa bar musicians and one global disco-music musician backing him up—turned out to be arguably the lone unqualified

example of an average-but-really-misterious in his political career to date. The question is whether it was a one-time fluke, or a signpost marking this as the time when a blarney political persona came, quite unexpectedly, into focus. Could it be that Harper had stumbled on a way to be honest and be likable?

At the very least, the choice of repertoire was inspired. Paul McCartney and John Lennon wrote the song in 1967, expressly for Ringo Starr to sing, dutifully limiting themselves to the few notes within their drummer's very modest vocal range. But the tune is more than that. It's not just any pop song, says Queen's University music professor Kap Peggly. "It has so much cultural capital. It's all of *fig. Pepper*, so it's got that cultural clout, and yet it's so vulnerable. It's the perfect song to reach as many people as possible."

Responsible as the memorable first track on a layman's record, but hardly surprising—it's a Ringo number, after all. Delivered, of course, by beens or, but, like the rest of the *Beat* oeuvre, surely resonant with younger consumers, thanks to the recent release of

the Beatles' Back Street music-video genre and the band's entire catalogue on digitally remastered CDs. Harper was plugging into a live network in redneck, and that was the point. At the same time, sung in the voice of a man who usually comes across as guarded, the lyrics took on a poetic poignancy. "I need somebody to love," he sang with a wry glance at the blacked crowd. They laughed, but it was a sympathetic way.

It helped that Harper's long-standing love of the Beatles is familiar as a standard live-in-profile of him. The song could be accepted as genuine homage, not grasping opportunism. Yet the favourite band his odds has never attached very freely to the popular view of the politician. At least, not until his NAC run. He defines character—tough, analytical, controlling—was hardly Beatlesque. Where there's been an evolution as how he's seen, the change hasn't done much to soften him, unless it's done to strengthen him as a softener.

It's not as if he and his technicians haven't tried to push the personal Harper onto the political. From his key early speeches after

he returned to politics to take the right, he has occasionally highlighted his average-guy credentials. Middle class, two kids, loves hockey—he all reads reasonably on paper. Unfortunately, Harper does not do a good-enough type. He's given over his entire adult life to warring political ambitions, tangled with hard-core ideological convictions. And he can be ruthless. Last fall, it's worth remembering, before he accidentally runs the opposition parties. Before they fought back, he suspended the democratically elected Parliament to prevent his own fall from power. He's not as Ringo-like.

Every previous effort to make him appear understanding or fun-loving was either an outright failure or only a partial success. Any politician this bold-looking guy to assume. But his there over been a more since-inducing sign that Harper is a leader yet and one boy too? A faded family photo on a can't possibly convey the real feeling between a parent and child. But that one where Harper still looks his son's hand while dropping him at school was a ready-to-ride caricature of child-reverence. The sweeter yet the donated for TV ads during last fall's campaign was instantly recognized as contrived anti-char.

And yet, through all the missteps, some things about Harper kept coming through. Just look at the numbers. Pollster Mike Harris's regular opinion survey on political leadership finds Harper not only chosen by more

NAC's Steynway group. "There's a level of success there that over time Canadians are being exposed to," Harris says. "He's conveying that he's a complex man, which is very different from what people thought of him in 1984."

In fact, "complex" doesn't quite capture Harper's variable quality. Sometimes he presents himself as a politician. After famously scolding, during last fall's campaign, at "red politics," this was not the case. Although he's often preoccupied with a reluctance to see his personal life in public, last fall's Tony platform discourse was happily illustrated with Harper family photos. The party doesn't worry much about dividing lines between personal and political opportunity. His NAC appearance was described afterwards as a favour to his wife, Laurence Harper, the event's honorary chair. Rather than being satisfied with YouTube clips and media coverage, though, the Conservatives explicitly publicized the performance by posting video of it on their website—exactly as they would their latest attack ad taken at Ignatieff.

It would have seemed rare resistance for Tony Steynway to let the moment have a life of its own. They've been trying to do that, after all, to humanize Harper, and suddenly there he was—recognizably himself and yet somehow more. Charismatic and hard. But at certain very, very close, he's human. He's not, at this time, is not. ■

THE REAL PROBLEM IN IRAN

Why focusing solely on Ahmadinejad's nuclear capability is a mistake

BY MICHAEL PETROU •

In the four months since Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad stole the June 12 presidential election, thousands of Iranian opposition supporters have disappeared into the maze of Iranian prisons, where many have been beaten and raped. Among these unaccounted victims, the detention of three young brothers is particularly significant. Mahdi, Mohammad, and Mehdi Moazzami were detained in the holy city of Qom last month. Now it is said to be politically active. But they are all graduates of Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Moazzami.

Mohsen Ali Moazzami, 57, was a leader of the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and was once the designated successor to the Islamic Republic's first founding supreme leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Moazzami clashed with Khomeini in 2005 over alleged connections to the government, particularly the ouster of the 13-year-old daughter of a colleague who was suspected of belonging to an opposition group. He's been a firm government critic ever since, but has remained politically powerful. Despite a period of house arrest from 1997 to 2005, his influence and prestige among Iran's most senior clerics afforded him some protection.

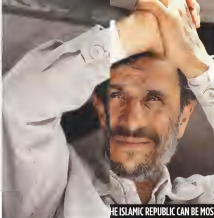
That protection vanished this summer. "No one in our right mind can believe" the official decision reads, Moazzami and of Ahmadinejad's apparent victory. When protests were crushed, Moazzami warned police that "revolving orders will not save them before God." He called for three days of public mourning after female protesters Neda Agha-Soltani was shot by a sniper. And he underscored the silence of other clerics and the lack of their dissent against Ahmadinejad's government by targeting Moazzami directly would not shut him up, the regime knew after his family

Relatives of other dissident clerics have also been jailed. These are men who only months ago were part of Iran's establishment—were Ahmadinejad's allies for the presidency. Mehdi Karubi and Mir Hossein Mousavi. The fact that they are now treated as political subversives reflects the enormous changes that are taking place within Iran's power structure. One Iranian exile described it, with only a hint of sarcasm, as "regime change, but not the regime change that George W. Bush had hoped for. Religious and political leaders who question Ahmadinejad's high risk government are being treated as traitors. A country that was once a theocracy with multiple pillars of power is transforming into a more secular military dictatorship, where power is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the Revolutionary Guards and the pro-government Basij militia."

There are different ways to categorize these changes. To be sure, they are worrying. The Revolutionary Guards are violent, radical, and unaccountable. But they are also widely loved within Iran, and their recent and aggressive reflects both the fragility of the lack of popular legitimacy for Ahmadinejad's reelected presidency.

This raises the question of how the United States and its allies should deal with Iran. U.S. President Barack Obama came to office promising to engage with the country over nuclear program, and he has. Telford Givens, a senior advisor to the president, says that the United States and its allies should deal with Iran. U.S. President Barack Obama came to office promising to engage with the country over nuclear program, and he has. Telford Givens, a senior advisor to the president, says that the United States and its allies should deal with Iran.

What has been largely overlooked, however, is the possibility that, by focusing on Iran's nuclear program, the United States has confirmed its longstanding on ground where he is most comfortable making a stand, and that created an opportunity to challenge the Iranian government on issues where he is not



subsidize the legitimacy of his rule and the rights of his fellow citizens.

The argument that Iran's nuclear program is a misplaced priority for the United States is based on an unpalatable assumption: it is nevertheless likely true that Iran will eventually develop a nuclear weapon—or at least the capability to do so. Negotiated deals, sanctions, even military strikes might disrupt Iran's nuclear program, but they are unlikely to end it. "The most important part of the program is human capital—the scientists and engineers. And they're still going to be there," says Daniel Byman, director of Georgetown University's Center for Peace and Security Studies.

According to Payman Akbarian, a professor of international law at McGill University, "The international community could possibly delay Iran's acquisition of nuclear capability but it cannot stop it. Sooner or later, Iran, which has a highly educated population, will acquire nuclear capability. That is an unavoidable fact," he told in an interview with Al Jazeera. "But at the end of the day, the problem is with the regime and not with its nuclear capability. There are many countries with nuclear capability, Japan, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, and Korea. We don't worry about those regimes, largely because they are democratic. A regime that is democratic

voluntarily give Israel or the United States, or that it would give nuclear technology to a terrorist group. But the assumption would be wrong. With a nuclear umbrella program, Iran would be emboldened to assert its influence in Afghanistan and Iraq, and through its proxy forces in Hezbollah in the Levant. Iran's neighbors and subversive in the Middle East, particularly Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, would feel threatened and might reason that they too must acquire nuclear weapons to protect themselves. So even if Iran's nuclear program can only be stalled, the ramifications of a nuclear Iran are sufficiently dire that playing fast time is a better option than doing nothing.

But those countries negotiating with Iran should also consider that the nuclear issue is a powerful propaganda tool for Iranian hardliners at a moment when the Islamic regime is weaker than it has been for decades. "The nuclear issue has been presented to the Iranian public as the right of Iran to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. And Western attempts to prevent Iran from acquiring that capability have been portrayed as attacks on Iran's sovereignty and attempts to keep Iran backward and to prevent it from the West," says Akbarian. "Iranians have a

HE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC CAN BE MOST EFFECTIVELY CHALLENGED ON

ITS DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY AND THE RIGHTS OF ITS CITIZENS.



PROTESTS ERUPTED following the June election, members of the Basij militia (right), which is associated with the Revolutionary Guards

is going to respond to the real demands of the people, which are economic and democratic issues. A regime that uses violence against its own citizens is more likely to use violence as a means of extending influence against its neighbors."

For enough, President Obama or French President Nicolas Sarkozy might say. We wish Iran were democratic, too. But it's not. And in the near-term Iran's nuclear program is not something we can safely ignore.

This is true. According to Byman, it is unlikely that Iran would launch an unpro-

posed series of nuclear attacks. They have assurances of support from the United States and the Russians, and of America's role in the 1951 oil crisis against Iranian prime minister Mohammad Mossadegh. The regime is playing to that scenario.

It's a public relations play with limited appeal. Seid Rahavani, a professor of political science at York University, says that most Iranians are concerned about political freedoms, education, and economic opportunities rather than Iran's nuclear capability—an assessment that is shared by Anshu Patel,

an Iranian journalist who recently immigrated to Canada. Still, according to David Saltzman, a research fellow at Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, "Iranians generally rally to the side of the government when the United States and the French say unreasonable things. And most Iranians know that what Iran is doing, Brazil is doing so well."

None of this is to suggest that Iran's nuclear program isn't important—only that it is not the most important thing happening in Iran right now. What will ultimately matter most to Iran's future, and the future of Iran's relationship with the rest of the world, is the restructuring of Iran's power structure, the emergence of the Revolutionary Guards as the dominant pro-government force in the country, and the continued resilience of Iran's democratic opposition.

The Islamic Republic, in short, is in turmoil. And where it can be most effectively challenged is not over nuclear weapons but its democratic legitimacy and the rights of its citizens. These are issues on which the United States and its Western allies can meet the regime and exert on a global stage of support from Iranian citizens in the mosques.

"There should always be room for dialogue, but I think that when the nuclear issue becomes the focal point, that is a mistake."

—MICHAEL PETROU

says Akbarian. He notes that international travel has declined since Iran has been designated an individual and an organization linked to Iran's nuclear program, and to the growing human rights abuses that Iranian crackdowns on people inside Iran. "People are saying, 'What about women against human rights? What about leaders that are responsible for murders and cancer and rape?' Why do we not have targeted sanctions against the regime? Why is everyone worried about the nuclear issue and the question of oil supplies, but nobody is worried about our struggle?" ■



ONE FOX NEWS pundit said Obama is bringing 'Chicago thug-style politics' to Washington

TARGET: CHICAGO

Conservative pundits have a real hate on for the Windy City

BY JAMES J. WHELAN • Move over, San Francisco, there's a new town for conservatives to hate: Chicago. President Obama's ultimately unsuccessful attempt to get the 2006 Olympics for his hometown has cost an explosion of anti-Chicago commentary from U.S. conservatives, while John Boehner, the leader of the Republicans in Congress, played to his base by saying that Obama seemed to be arguing that "he's the President of the United States, not the mayor of Chicago." Conservatives still find time to attack Hollywood for defuncting Roman Polanski, or New York for letting New York, but their heart is not in these days. The new enemy is Chicago, which, as Fox News's Sean Hannity put it, may not be "a city where we want the Olympics taking place."

These pundits seem to be arguing that, as Michele Malin said on Fox News, Obama's quest for the Olympics was "all about paying back" his Chicago "crimes." They argued that the city itself is the violent epitome of American gone wrong. A typical headline on MSNBC's popular conservative website read "CHICAGOAGAGA: Another boy critically beaten 'Blood all over street'." Malin posted a video of a gang war among mostly African American teenagers in Chicago, and warned that "Community organizing is a racist

stopped Chicago's teen violence epidemic. The Olympics will resolve this long-festering problem, either." The message is that Democratic liberal policies have turned Chicago into hell on earth. Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, Fred Siegel summed up the current view of Chicago when he described it as "a mix of black nationalism, as my liberal, madman and neo-conservative politics."

When conservatives start portraying Chicago as the crime capital of America (it has never had more murders in recent years), they're portraying it as the birthplace of Obama's supposed fascism, often using a line from the movie *The Untouchables*, "the Chicago way" to describe Obama's methods. Hannity recently said that Obama is bringing "Chicago thug-style politics" to Washington. It's gotten to the point where a lot of opposition to Obama is phrased in anti-Chicago terms. Republican congressman Darrell Issa accused Obama's chief of staff Rahm Emanuel of accusing him of "stealing to the playbook of the Chicago political machine."

It's unusual to see opposition to a president turn into opposition to an entire city, few

people trusted Obama, Nick, just because Gerald Ford lived there. But a lot of the anti-Obama feelings from the 2006 presidential campaign are almost interchangeable with anti-Chicago feelings. The campaign itself, Obama's origins to be carefully scrutinized, and made conservative anti-Obama of Chicago based figures like Bill Ayers, the former Weather Underground member who has been elevated to a position of respect in his community, or the late Saul Alinsky, the Chicago worker and community organizer whose book *Rules for Radicals* has been copied by conservatives as a key to understanding Obama's politics. To conservatives, it may seem like Chicago is a city that embraces all the people who are trying to destroy America.

But this could also be a sign of a shift in emphasis on the part of U.S. conservatives. San Francisco has long been based on social conservatives, a backlash against the city's high population of gay people, artists, and gay artists. But in the Obama era, conservatives are de-emphasizing social issues and focusing more on opposing government intervention. And Chicago is the ultimate target for that kind of attack, the *Business Week* magazine raked it last year as "the worst city for increasing personal freedoms," due to its many regulations on everything from alcohol to pens. And unlike New York or other well-known cities, Chicago can't blame its poor but it's not as far from the middle, the city has not had a Republican mayor since 1973. That would make it a perfect target for conservative attacks even if Obama had never set foot in that town.

The ironic thing about all this is that Chicago isn't as exactly that liberal by some persons with other big U.S. cities. The University of Chicago is the home of conservative economics, and Jack Stettin, the CNBC personality who looked at the conservative "tea party" crisis, did so from the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. Still, the city was once a stronghold of the Windy City terms to be antagonistic, even now that it isn't. It's getting the Olympics. Why waste time attacking other urban hellholes when you can talk about a place that, according to Glenn Beck on Fox News, "is good at community organizing, and organized labor, and organized labor—oops. Did I say that out loud?" ■

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NIGERIA: OIGTWC'S DRAWS PROTESTS

In the south-east Delta State, a group of Nigerian army soldiers led by a man nicknamed Oigtwc, just like a former Nigerian president, played out a war to take, including weapons, and not only the body parts of an attempt to gain the military power. Now, the Nigerian government is trying to ban the film, asking the country's censor board to euthanize it. Oigtwc, they say, portrays Nigerians as criminals, prostitutes and gangsters.



A co-ed school in Saudi Arabia



A small victory, but for women other changes are coming slowly

BY MICHAEL BAROZAT • Education in Saudi Arabia used to be strictly segregated along gender lines. That's all changed with the opening last month of the kingdom's first co-ed university—the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST). Not only will women be able to study and work alongside men, they won't be required to wear veils and will be permitted to drive cars—both serious no-nos for all other Saudi women.

It's a bellwether in Saudi Arabia, where the status of women has often been described as akin to apartheid. KAUST sits outside the education ministry—it's run by Aramco, the state oil company, which invested \$10 billion in its construction. The university is part of King Abdullah's plan to diversify the Saudi economy beyond oil, and to create new job centers for the large Saudi youth population (more than half of the population is under 25). To do this, KAUST could be considered a small balloon to expand women's education.

In 2007, King Abdullah appointed the first female deputy minister for girls' education, thereby pioneering women's education while also confirming segregated learning. Moreover, while Saudi Arabia has more female post-secondary graduates than men, the latter represent just 45 per cent of the workforce, and over 80 per cent of working women have jobs in education.

Previous cases for equality for Saudi women, rather than just for slowly, they campaigned unsuccessfully for the right to buy undergarments from female sales in stores. Participation in athletics is also frowned upon, so one female athlete in Saudi Arabia would lead to social sparks as intense as Israeli elections.

Don't expect the pace of progress to pick up soon. Just 15 per cent of students currently enrolled at KAUST are women. ■

Bringing albino-killers to justice

BY KATIE ECKHART • In the past two years, 51 albinos have been killed in Tanzania. No one has been brought to justice for committing these crimes. Until now.

Last Wednesday, a Tanzanian court sentenced three men to death for killing a 14-year-old albino boy, Matiasa Duma from Shinyanga, in brutal fashion—they kidnapped him, then cut his body into pieces. An equally barbaric case is also generating national attention: Mariam Enekeusai, a five-year-old girl, was kidnapped by a group of machete-wielding men in Morogoro. The culprits divided the girl's body up among themselves and drank her blood while her siblings watched. Murdered albinos are usually sold at high prices to witch doctors, who grind up the body parts and brew them into poisons that they believe carry magic power.

Albinism—a genetic disorder characterized by a lack of skin, eye and/or hair pigment—has a significantly higher rate of incidence in Tanzania than in the rest of the world. Sometimes, too, it's linked to unusual, although infrequent, may have played a role. Historically, some albinos were killed at night by fearful parents, that there is less pressure today, but many still are young, susceptible to violence brought on by the blistering East African sun.

Peter Ash, founder of the U.C.-based non-profit albino support group Under the Same Sun, cautions that while last week's verdict is a welcome first step toward ending violence, Tanzania must do much more: "We continue to see the justice owed to the victims, and the albinos murdered in this genocide began in November 2007." Officials have consulted with doctors, and several men are now making their way through the courts. But thus far, progress has been sluggish—by comparison, neighbouring Burundi, where albino killings are also on the rise, has already convicted at least five people.

The Tanzania Albino Society, an advocacy group for the estimated 17,000 Tanzanian albinos, has called for the convicted men to be publicly hanged. It believes that this would be an explicit indication of government resolve, and could thwart future attacks. ■

Germany's new leftist powerhouse

BY KATIE ECKHART • Results from Germany's recent election sparked a rush of headlines about a so-called "shift to the right" in European politics. There's some truth to this: the pro-business Free Democrats, who made huge gains, will now be part of the new coalition government with Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats, while the centre-left Social Democrat Party (SPD) sawed its worst results in post-war history. But while



Die Linke traces its roots back to Communist East Germany

the SPD floundered, another party on the left—the far-left—saw huge gains. Die Linke, which traces its roots back to Communist East Germany, earned a whopping 12 per cent of the vote. Two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the strong showing by the most radically left party in the Bundestag suggests that some of the old divisions between east and west have yet to be bridged.

In a campaign where other parties were criticised for vague policies and platforms, Die Linke ("The Left") adopted an aggressive stance like the war in Afghanistan—It was the only party to call for an immediate German withdrawal. And for the slumping economy and unemployment, Die Linke adopted the election motto "Wrench for All," a message that no doubt appealed to disaffected workers.

In the former East Germany, where Die Linke has traditionally found its support, "a size of the population remains uncomfortable with the free market orientation of the country," says James Ridgeway, chair of the department of German and Slavic studies at the University of Waterloo. And while many have left for the apparently greener pastures in the West, those who remain, Rudgeway notes, still feel some uneasiness for the past. "Lots of my old work colleagues are now supporting [Die Linke]," one laid off worker told the BBC. "People are frightened that the gap between the rich and the poor is growing wider." ■



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INSIDE THE MEETING THAT SAVED THE WORLD

How the seven richest nations went all in on a plan that brought the global economy back on the brink



ANDREW COYNE

THE MEETING WAS NOT going well. On Friday, OCT. 30, 2008, finance ministers and central bankers from the Group of Seven leading industrial economies had gathered in Washington for their regular fall meeting. The circumstances, of course, were anything but routine. Four weeks after the collapse of Lehman Brothers, the 158-year-old Wall Street institution, the financial world was in a state of escalating panic. With banks copping one after the other, stock markets in a death spiral, credit markets all but dismantled, the meeting had taken on crucial significance.

Around the world, investors were looking to governments for solutions—only they could provide the kind of rock-solid assurances that might put a floor under the markets. Among allied states from the U.S. and there was some hope of reaching unity on the situation. A weak statement, or worse, a failure

to agree, and the entire world financial system might well tip over the edge.

An hour into the meeting, finance looked the most likely option. Under the extreme pressure of the moment, normally cautious, buttoned-down politicians and civil servants were pouring out their emotions: their anger at things having descended to this point, their fears at what might follow. The exchanges were punishing and direct. They were wearing into the alysis, and they knew it.

Now the German finance minister, Peer Steinbrück, had the floor. A bourgeois, conservative Social Democrat, he was the dean of G7 finance ministers, having been in the job since 1999. Though his English was excellent, when he walked to make a point with special vehemence, he spoke in his native teutonic. And he was speaking in German now, gruff, angry torrents of it, as the other ministers struggled to follow the simultaneous translation. Hadn't he said them all would come to do this? Hadn't he said this at one meeting,

demanded that at another? On and on he raged, for good reason. Why didn't need a translator to know that he was in no mood to compromise.

At last one of those present, listening to this tirade, began to take off his headphones. If the Germans weren't going to come to the table, there was no point. Best to start planning for the fallow...

And yet, improbably, the meeting ended on a success. The G7 emerged united, making an extraordinary one-page statement pledging to stand behind their banks, wherever the cost. In time, it would prove to be the turning point in the crisis—"the beginning of the end," as Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney's engaged assistant. But it was a new thing. "It was historic," Finance Minister Jim Flaherty recalls. Everyone there knew that "if this meeting was not successful, the consequences would be severe."

The unity of that remarkable meeting, its near-failure and eventual triumph, is a vivid reminder of the importance of the human

THE MAJOR PLAYERS pose outside the U.S. Treasury Department building in Washington following their meeting last October

factor in history. Just as the punch had landed, at critical moments, on human emotion—fear, optimism, resentment, unity—so would the response. Not only would the G7 ministers have to overcome their own doubts and divisions, they would have to convince the financial world could trust and take heart in "to get to that point, however, required policy makers to go through a chaotic journey of awareness, as they grappled with a constantly mutating crisis that seemed to defy all remedy.

IT BEGAN, as everybody now knows, in the U.S. housing market. A revolution of loans—the way monetary policy on the part of the U.S. Federal Reserve; federal regulators were requiring banks to make more mortgages available to lower-income borrowers, massive purchases of these new mortgages by the hybrid public-private entities known as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac—had opened to drive U.S. housing prices to absurd levels. From 1999 to the bubble's peak in 2006, the price of the average U.S. house more than doubled.

A notable contribution came from the aggressive expansion of lenders specializing in so-called "subprime" mortgages to borrowers with poor credit ratings, concentrated in the Sunbelt states of Florida, Arizona and California. These loans were then bundled up and combined with more secure forms of debt in complex investment instruments known as collateralized debt obligations (CDOs), to be sold on credit markets worldwide—a process known as securitization.

Theoretically, passing individual mortgages and selling loans to large numbers of buyers was supposed to spread the risk of these loans. In reality, the complexity of the securitized instruments made it difficult for even

the most sophisticated investors to understand exactly what they were purchasing. Yet with investors eyes on such low levels, financial institutions had few choices about plunging in to debt to buy CDOs, with their seemingly attractive combination of low risk—assigned by the AAA ratings the credit agencies awarded them—and high returns.

Investment banks in particular, unencumbered by the sorts of prudential regulations attached to deposit-taking banks, placed especially large bets on CDOs. Compensation packages encouraged it, and their risk assessment models seemed to validate. But

what now worth less than the nominal value of the mortgages.

The first signs of disaster in the housing market began to emerge in early 2007, with the collapse of several subprime lenders. When New Century Financial Corp., the largest subprime lender of all, declared bankruptcy in April, the rout was on. Ratings agencies began hastily downgrading subprime-related securities. Investors, including Freddie Mac, stopped buying. In June, Bear Stearns, the fifth-largest U.S. investment bank, announced it would no longer let investors take their money out of two hedge funds that were heavily into subprime securities.

With a similar move by France's BNP Paribas in August, the credit bank came into the open. The problems were just that the assets in its funds had dropped in value without anyone having



WHILE CAMPAIGNING IN WHITBY, FLAHERTY TOOK A CELLPHONE CALL IN A PARKING LOT. IT WAS PAULSON.

for the commercial banks it was an attractive proposition as well, since regulators allowed them to sell just one capital against these mortgage-backed securities that would be required for the mortgages themselves. And to the extent they had any concerns about the risks they were taking on, these could be assuaged by the purchase of a form of insurance, known as credit default swaps.

Selling as house prices fell, draining the whole risky sector of collateralized debt could continue to grow. But that credit was starting to heat up inflation. Through 2005 and 2006, central banks began to tighten up interest rates in response. Low-income home owners who had been enticed to buy via adjustable rate mortgages—low at first, but with a risk of revolution later—suddenly found themselves in over their heads. Defaults multiplied. Housing prices began to fall, and fell, as increasing numbers of mortgage holders simply walked away from houses that

were even going to price on them. They had been, and the bank, "a complete engine of liquidity" in the market for subprime assets. Translated: other financial institutions were simply refusing to deal with them. Suspicion and mistrust had seeped in where there was sheer. Soon all became suspicious that owned subprime investments, or that were supposed of owning them, or that even dealt with others who owned them.

At about the same time the Canadian market for (and banks) used included commercial paper (ABCP) looked up. As it happened, these were not backed by subprime mortgage—instead, it alone emerged they weren't backed by much of anything, "who knows?" They were so opaque, it was impossible to tell. "When you looked into the structure of the facilities, the leverage and complexity was jaw-dropping," Carney says.

That gave the Canadian authorities an entry to the broader nature of the crisis. "We

In a \$600-billion heist, the largest bank robbery filing in history.

It was a disaster, but one that might have had a silver lining. If it had re-established the no-bailout principle, any hope of that was lost, however, in the chaos that followed. Merrill Lynch was already gone, forced into the arms of Bank of America that same week end. A major money market fund manager, Reserve Management, was known to have invested heavily in Lehman Brothers' core municipal paper. Within two days it had sold itself more than \$40 billion in endorsements, rendering it effectively insolvent.

With Lehman's assets frozen, hedge funds that had parked their securities with the firm began to panic. If Lehman was not safe, they asked, was anyone? They rushed to pull their securities from Lehman's remaining funds. Watching their assets begin to evaporate, Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs, the last independent investment bank on standing, prudently converted themselves into bank holding companies the following week.

The shock of the Lehman bankruptcy would also prove the undoing of AIG, the world's largest insurer, already facing credit downgrades over its own massive bet on credit default swaps. Yet again, the U.S. government reversed course. AIG, like Finance Max and Freddie Mac before it, was judged too big to fail, its return for its \$85-billion loan from the Fed, it was taken into government ownership. The effect was to save for their confusion, if a bailout was all right for AIG, why not Lehman?

It was clear that policy-makers had misjudged the crisis yet again. It wasn't, as they had thought, a matter of a few leveraged institutions. Rather, the whole system (Canada excepted) was under-optimized and over-leveraged—mirroring the United States, but globally. Within the next few days, a series of financial institutions would be taken over, bailed out, nationalized, or shut down. Washington Mutual and Wachovia in the United States, Bradford and Bingley in the U.K., Fortis in the Netherlands, Hypo Real Estate in Germany. To many observers, it seemed the world was sliding into a repeat of the Great Depression.



CAREY pointed out that all the major European banks were trading at less than half their value

TO BE MANAGING a national economy in the middle of this meltdown was to feel a strange sense of déjà vu. "There's no question—it was close. There were some very scary moments," the senior Finance official says. "It was just like the door was falling out."

To be sure, Canada's banks had largely been spared. Yet Canadian policy-makers that was quelling other countries' financial systems. For one thing, there was real concern that Canada's banks could be side-tracked in the panic. Moreover, as Flaherty remembers, "not all of our banks were equally strong. I wasn't going into particular banks, but they were not equally strong."

For Flaherty, it was an especially strange time, in the middle of a federal election campaign. "I was part of a caucus," he says. "I remember 'waking at 6:30 in the morning' in his Whitey ending, then rushing over to the parking lot of a local furniture store to take 'a conference call with Hank Paulson and the European finance ministers'—as his wife puts it."

Canadian policy-makers were in close contact with their counterparts in other countries. "Every morning at seven, 7:10, we would have a G7 deputies telephone call. On a really bad day that'd be another at the

end of the day," the senior Finance official recalls. Every dispatch seemed to bring news of fresh disasters. "I was wondering 'You'd get up and you'd read your Blackberry and you [say], 'Oh [expletive]! It's going to be a bad, bad, day.'"

"We have a finance minister in London. And he would have [already] sent me a report about what was happening in the London markets. One day it's 'Liquidity has completely dried up. You can't find it anywhere.' The next day it'll open my eyes at six o'clock in the morning and it's 'Whatever liquidity there was yesterday has disappeared today!'"

For Carey, the panic often came at the middle of the night for as other governments tried to resolve taking a particularly urgent call from Fed chairman Ben Bernanke while dealing an unhelpful two-year-old son on his knee. "For him, there were far from the worst days of the crisis. At least it was out in the open," he says. "The run-up to Lehman was almost worse, being taken up inside knowing that things are on the edge, and people don't know things are on the edge."

"There wasn't a great strain, because you have something to do. You've got a series of questions to address, you've got a series of decisions to make... Being in battle, if you

WHAT'S THE SPREAD?

The TED spread measures the difference between the three-month rate on Treasury bills and the rate for three-month U.S. commercial paper. It's a key indicator of the credit markets. It's peaked at 454 basis points on Oct. 16, 2008, but today sits at less than 20.



will, it's liberating, because you can actually do something about it."

Meanwhile, the situation internationally was spiraling out of control. Two days, governments realized that they could not continue putting out one fire after another. They had to find a common solution. In the United States, Paulson unveiled the \$700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), the size of which was nothing less than to drain up the entire U.S. financial system's balance sheets.

Others were even further on edge. In Ireland, with its major banks near collapse, vowed to guarantee all bank deposits for a period of six years. But this only made matters worse for its neighbors. If Ireland was guaranteeing deposits, why leave your funds, say, in a British bank? Well, on Oct. 8, Britain announced a \$400 billion rescue plan for its own system, partially nationalizing eight banks and offering to prop up the rest. Other European countries were likewise left scrambling.

Everything had been tried, it seemed, and nothing was working. The more banks each country's intervention, the worse the panic became. Not even a simultaneous intervention by all of the G7 central banks, a highly unusual move, seemed to have any effect. The week of Oct. 6-10, the Dow Jones fell six

times in six days, it was widely declared the first "World War." Credit markets had all but ceased to function. The TED spread had now widened to more than 400 points.

The crisis was in its tenth month. Governments had tried to deal with it in less drastic ways, but with the global financial system on the verge of imploding, there was no

PAULSON OPENED THINGS BY INVITING EVERYONE TO SPEAK FRANKLY. HE NEEDN'T HAVE BOTHERED.

an overview of the situation as it stood in the United States, with special emphasis on how he proposed to implement the TARP. Opening the floor up to discussion, he invited everyone to speak frankly. He needn't have bothered.

The discussion quickly erupted into an angry critique of American actions in the crisis, and the lack of a consensus approach to the bailout question. There had been a lot of criticism, but not Lehman. Lehman had been allowed to fail, but not AIG. Some were critical of a bailout, some were critical of the firm from remaining markets, the seemingly endless U.S. interventions had unnerved them.

The crisis, says Flaherty, was "brutally frank. People said what they thought, and there was a lot of hostility toward the United States."

The "general" European view was that it was the fault of the United States that credit markets were in the terrible shape that they were in. At one point someone handed around a simple chart, showing where credit markets were before the collapse of Lehman Brothers, and where they were after. If only the Americans had not been so stupid as to let Lehman fail, it was suggested, there would have been no crisis.

It wasn't just the Americans that the Europeans were furious with. There was much bitterness at the British, too, for having "broken from the pack" earlier that week. Liberty was not lost on some of these people. The Euro pattern were angry at the Americans for failing to bail out Lehman. And they were angry at the British for having bailed out their banks—though the Euro press had done the same. It's rather a cruel irony that it was unclear which they were more open to the unconcern of the Americans or the consistency of the Brits.

For as long as four things carried on this way. The G7 was a small group in comparison but not often, they knew each other well. Perhaps that made for greater openness. Perhaps it made the negotiations easier all the more. "There was strong anxiety expressed by some, some anger, some hostility, a single

view. The G7 was a small group in comparison but not often, they knew each other well. Perhaps that made for greater openness. Perhaps it made the negotiations easier all the more. "There was strong anxiety expressed by some, some anger, some hostility, a single

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of raised voices." Flaherty says, "This one was screaming or anything like that, but it was clear everyone was stressed."

Normally phlegmatic, at least in public, the minister and several bankers shared their fears, should they fail to reach agreement on a plan. "None of us were sure that markets would even open on Monday," Flaherty says. "This was a potential meltdown."

Indeed, even as they were meeting, the markets were crashing their screaming sobs. "We're all looking at our BlackBerry, and the markets are still headed south," the senior Finance official laughs, mockingly. "It's not getting any better." There was talk of the consequences of a financial collapse, even of "social disorder." And there were moments of black humor. Steve Brink told of meeting a waitress from the old Epcot Germany, who said she had witnessed the fall of Communism, and now found the war witnessing the fall of capitalism.

The Carlsbaders were worried. The point of the emergency was to correct one error, and instead in support of a comprehensive bank guarantee, they had made seven different attempts to defuse a continuing crisis. "There had been some helpful interventions and things done," Carney notes. "In the run-up, in the corridor, just before, and what had been very rare."



what we'll see but one of us was nervous and nervous about it. I looked like I wasn't going to come together."

Flaherty told the flagrant pointing at the American unilateralism. When the Europeans seemed genuinely to believe, not only that the crisis had started in the American banking system, but that that's where it remained. The implication was that all they had to do was clean up their act, and all would be well. "This was amazing the real way that, you know, a lot of European banks were leveraged at 10 to 3, 40 to 3, of our rate."

Credited around them. Denying on his expertise in capital markets—he worked at Goldman Sachs in London for many years before going into public service—he was over the trading positions of the major European banks, pointing out that they were all trading at less than book value. The implication (Flaherty thought) that his biggest banks were bankrupt. They weren't, of course. That he had had to be communicated in a way that was well-served, and believe—that is, by an expert, was a guarantee.

The Carlsbaders were an interesting person to make this point, given the speech of our banking system. We had no vested interest, as it were. We had not had to bail out any banks, nor were our banks likely to



THE COLLAPSE OF Lehman Brothers sent shock waves through the financial markets.

have need of any guarantee. Yet there were, offering to provide one anyway, as part of a coordinated international effort.

Yet the Europeans had good reason to be concerned about the implications. It wasn't just the raised voices question, though this was troubling to everyone around the table. And it wasn't just the crisis to the taxpayers, though these were potentially enormous. It was also the political hazard of bailing out wealthy bankers for the costs of their own mistakes. They had run the popular rebel-

conspirator.

They began work on the statement they would release to the world afterward. Usually these things are drafted in advance by deputies, and indeed one had been prepared this time. "It was fine," the senior Finance official said. "It was your nice, perfectly acceptable G7 communiqué." It went on as much the usual length, in much the usual cautious diplomatic language. Among the agencies of the situation, the ministers decided to cut it up.

"I was an advocate for that," Flaherty says. "I was really concerned that we had to get away from the traditional kind of communiqué. We had to do something we could put on our piece of paper, that was clear and concise." Accepting such an evolutionary, iterative lead brought with him his own, single-point plan. In the meeting, as he belated down to just five points, with the ministers, governors and their deputies drafting and revising the document on the spot.

Brink, in particular, felt exposed. Though a Social Democrat, he was proud of his reputation as a fiscal conservative. He had tried to renounce the taxpayers' risk in this whole affair. He had already been harmed by the banks' failure to come clean on the size of their losses. And now he was supposed to give them a blank check? How was he going to explain that to his taxpayers?

The longer he spoke, the more hysterical seemed. And then, just as he was finishing, everything changed. He was unhappy it had come to this, but it seemed he had no choice. If they were going to save the system, He would go along with the plan.

With that, any remaining resistance seemed to dissolve. Every body had had their chance to yell. Now it was time to fix the problem. "Overdue figure printing stopped," Flaherty recalls, "and in the second hour of the meeting, people realized we need to create a plan. So that's when it got more

and constructive."

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FORMER AIG CEO Martin Sullivan faced protesters while testifying on Capitol Hill.

and consistent to that our real depositors will continue to have confidence in the safety of their deposits.

3. Make action, where appropriate, to restore the secondary markets for mortgages and other securities assets.

It was all there, a comprehensive, coordinated and structured response to the crisis, at least. There was a further promise to "protect taxpayers" and "avoid potentially damaging effects on other countries." There was mention of using "non-monetary policy tools as necessary and appropriate," and a pledge to address "the pressing need for reform of the financial system." But the key to the whole thing was that first point. When it came to "operationally important financial guarantees," the G7 countries would "use all available tools" to "prevent their failure." Not "work to reduce," or "avert measures," or the usual something, something.

The second and third were almost as reassuring. Central banks were pledging to provide unlimited amounts of liquidity. "Take all necessary steps," if necessary, banks would have access to capital from "public as well as private sources," if that's what it took.

The governments of the seven nations nations had just done all this. They were pledging every last dollar of their resources, if necessary, to defend their banking systems. There would be no more Lehman.

EVENTS MOVED very quickly after that. As it happened, there was a series of international meetings planned in Washington that same weekend. Everybody who was any body in the global policy community was there. The G7 representatives met with their president George W. Bush the following morning, and he was his public endorsement. For the time. Later that day the IMF agreed. There remained only the minutiae of the minutiae of the G20 that evening.

President Bush was a surprise attendee,

giving a graceful speech accepting America's share of responsibility for having caused the crisis, and pledging his commitment to do whatever it took to see things right. It was by all accounts an effective intervention.

It was Saturday night. All of the major world economic organizations had now endorsed the first point plan, which as Flaherty notes, "hadn't existed 36 hours before."

Within the next 24 hours, governments began putting the plan into action. For Car-



IT LOOKED LIKE IT WASN'T GOING TO COME TOGETHER, RECALLS CARNEY

ney, this presented some difficult issues. There was the risk that, by signing on to a pledge to prevent any symmetrically important bank failures, the government might be seen to acknowledge there was some risk of that happening. On top of which, there was the British parliamentary tradition that governments do not take major decisions during an election campaign. Nevertheless, Finance put out a press release the following Monday that at last appeared to commit the government of Canada to the fight.

Carney was confident. "The G7 had done what it said it was going to do by the time the markets opened. Which was imperative. And the markets opened. Which was a controversy. Which was a controversy."

EMPLOYEE OF THE WEEK

invaluable services."

Not only did they open, they positively roared their approval. On Monday, Oct. 15, the Dow Jones gained nearly 900 points, closing half of its losses of the previous week. It didn't last—the Dow dropped nearly 800 points that Wednesday, though it regained those losses over the next two weeks—and the market continued to drift down through the rest of the month. As the effects of the financial shock worked their way through the real economy, but the something, off the decline of September and early October had been halted. The game had been broken.

The effect was even more dramatic on the credit markets. Again, the chart tells the story. It is surely no coincidence that the spiking TED spread hit its very peak, at 464 points, probably on Oct. 10. From that day on it began to drop, precipitously. By January the TED spread was back to around 100 points, the level a first hit back in August of 2007. Today, it sits at less than 30 points.

Even so, the G7 had to work to establish the credibility of its plan. "I think some people believed it," Carney says. "But I think a lot of people didn't. And I think that it was no longer true as needed to become people didn't fully believe it." It was only in the first quarter of this year that "people started to say, okay, Bank X is really going bankrupt, because government isn't going to be allowed to fail."

Talking to the Canadian press, Carney says, "I've had no doubt as to whether or not we're going to be allowed to fail."

Talking to the Canadian press, Carney says, "I've had no doubt as to whether or not we're going to be allowed to fail."

RISTS OF FURY AT 30,000 FEET
Pilots and crew members came to blows on an Air India flight on Saturday, spilling out of the cabin to the amazement of the 106 passengers onboard. The fist fight, which apparently erupted after a crew member accused the pilots of sexual harassment, is now under investigation. "It was a clear case of inappropriate," airline spokesman Jitendra Bhargava said. No one was injured, but two pilots and two crew members are suspended for now.

The truth about Canwest's collapse



STEVE MACCHI

There are certain archetypal characters that come up again and again as we rush to assemble out the first draft of history in business, the roles we particularly will want the anecdotal entrepreneur, the maverick genius, the sage sage, the disruptive outsider, the establishment man, and, of course, the dilettante. We organize these characters into familiar categories—the hero, the hustling kid, the tragic maverick, later—again and again, not just to elevate the mundane details of commerce into dramatic narratives, but because these archetypes serve a purpose. People are good or bad, smart or stupid, and everything ends again.

We revere or of these familiar fables because they impose a tidy order on the chaotic mess of life. They reinforce certain ideas that make the world seem less arbitrary, less random, and less frightening. Triumphs are always the result of human genius, and failures are generally flaws of character within our DNA. Everybody deserves their fate.

If you've been reading about the collapse of Canwest Global Communications into bankruptcy protection this week, you'll recognize some of those characters and themes Canada's biggest and most powerful media conglomerate, a colossus in television, radio, newspapers and the Web, has unraveled. It wouldn't be the largest, but its visionary Roy Ager. And his prodigious legacy was squared by the second generation, particularly Leonard Ager, a son who lacked his father's drive and business sense, and who now presides over the puzzling all his empire.

It's probably inevitable that the history books will remember it this way. But perhaps we can make room for one more important little footnote: it wasn't nearly so simple.

To begin with, the patriarch of this clan is an awkward fit for the role of conquering hero. Roy Ager was a bold and energetic deal maker who thought big and had the fire to make it happen. But his primary achievement was to amass a collection of regional television stations in an era when broadcast permits were government-issued licenses to print money. He filled his air time mainly with American network programs, onto which he would graft Canadian ads. That was smart business and it made him phenomenally rich—but let's not confuse this with visionary

entrepreneurship. In fact, the problems really began when Roy started dreaming big.

He was not content for Canwest to be a widely profitable player, secure in its Canadian roots. The empire was called Canwest Global and he was determined to make the second part mean something. He openly raved about creating an empire to rival NewsCorp and Viacom. His ambitions led him to expand to Ireland, New Zealand, Australia and elsewhere. It led to the direct-marketing boom



It's hard to hold a fire sale when your house is actually on fire

media, film production, cable specialty channels, various Web ventures. And, of course, it led him to newspapers and Conrad Black. Leonard became CEO in 1999 but, as he would frequently acknowledge, Roy remained the driving force behind Canwest until his death in 2001. The deal to buy the bulk of Hollinger's Canadian newspaper business in 2000 for \$1.2 billion was unquestionably Roy's deal. It marked a quantum leap forward in Canwest's power and influence in Canadian media, and it marked the beginning of the company's long, losing struggle against the weight of its debt. A company that owed \$143 million in 1999 owed \$1.5

billion by the end of 2002.

It's all forgotten now, but in the three years after Roy's death Leonard fought hard to pay down the debt load—reducing it to \$1.6 billion. But then came the deal that everyone will remember as his undoing: the mind-bogglingly complex purchase of specialty channels including Showtime, the Food Network and HGTV from Alliance Atlantis. They're good assets, in the end part of the broadcasting business that is growing rapidly. Even now, plenty of suitors would love to pay them from Canwest's cold, dead hands. But the deal came with another \$1 billion in debt, and a shotgun clause that always made investors nervous. Those terms gave way to full-on panic as the necessary stumbled and the advertising business went into a common 25 months ago.

Leonard threw men overboard in fits as he could. Canwest ceased to be Global as he moved to Ireland, New Zealand, Turkey, purchased *The New Republic* magazine, and shut down money-losing local stations. But it's hard to hold a fire sale when your house is actually on fire. He learned that the hard way when he came time to sell his stake in Harcourt, Inc., the Australian broadcaster that had once been a crown jewel valued well over \$1 billion. When private investors offered only about \$1 billion in 2001, Leonard balked and decided to wager on better markets ahead. Of course, as we all know now, that was a disastrously bad bet. Further that getting A&L 75% share, he ended lost nearly for A&L 10.

The deal was timely hailed as a much-needed break for Canwest, but it was really a sign that Leonard was out of cards to play. The empire Roy envisioned has been foreclosed upon. Shareholders have been wiped out. The family fortune is mostly diminished. Viewers are casting about for alternatives. There's no way to put a happy face on any of it.

You can blame the heir if you like, but if Leonard had nothing as a CEO it was not that he was a bungling spendthrift, frittering away the company gold. It's that he clung so tightly and too long to the vision that Roy left behind. The collapse of Canwest is a story of a company whose unbalanced strategy succumbed to financial mismanagement, and an failure was set in motion years before the torch was passed. Generations conspired to bring the high wire act to a painful end. Perhaps the CEO should have seen these problems coming, but he's got plenty of company in that.

Our need for fundamentalism demands that we cast Leonard Ager as the duke who couldn't escape his destiny. That's the way history works. But that's a harsher fate than he deserves. ■

steve.macchi@maclean's.ca

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ECONOWATCH

A WEEKLY SCORECARD ON THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY IN NORTH AMERICA AND BEYOND

LATEST INTELLIGENCE

For the second month, Canadian economists could credit to Justin O'Brien's leadership in the GDP and cheer the approach to recovery that was under the clock for July came out. The economy finished with a growth of 0.1 per cent, well below the 0.5 per cent expansion economists had been looking for.

"It is a month that was widely expected to define the onset of economic recovery, the economy instead laid in egg." —*Straw Hat economist HSBC*

"Like a winged angel, Canada's economy is spurring at its warming up." —*Avery Skingfield, chief economist, CIBC World Markets*

"We're not talking a shot across the bow of optimists, this is... a torpedo through the hull."

—*Douglas Porter, deputy chief economist, BMO Capital Markets*

"It just shows the recovery is fragile... so we have to stay the course, continue to implement the economic action plan, the vitalists that we are putting into the economy." —*Finance Minister Jim Flaherty*

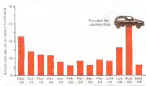
"We were thinking the global recovery would really benefit Canada. But we're realizing that was true for very few sectors." —*Sebastien Lavoie, economist, Laurentian Bank*

"The figures provide a sobering reminder that the technical end of a recession may not imply a rapid recovery." —*Erin White, economist, Global Securities*



GRAPH OF THE WEEK

A CLUNKER OF A MONTH — U.S. auto sales rebounded in August, thanks to the \$1-billion cash-for-clunkers program. Now the bad news: the industry is going to see a lot of trouble for trouble's sake.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES



► The spirit of large isn't what it used to be. As the world's largest annual auction for ranches, sales were down over 40 per cent compared to last year. Sales had been booming in recent decades, as money and money buyers, looking for a place to put their money and pension funds, were drawn to the market. But the downturn has taken its toll. Not only are ranches looking the way they are, but so are the ranches, where housing is down 11 per cent this year.

► When it comes to accounts, mortgage has in peril. Single people have been losing their jobs at a rate more than 50 per cent higher than married people in the U.S., according to a recent study. Married people are doing better for a few reasons: they are more likely to take lower-paying jobs to support families, and are typically more educated than their younger, single co-workers.

THE GOOD NEWS

Back in service

The U.S. service sector is back in expansion mode for the first time in a year. The Institute for Supply Management's non-manufacturing survey rose 3.5 points to 50.9 in September. The service sector accounts for 50 per cent of the U.S. economy.

Home, sweet homes

Another month, another hopeful sign of life in the overall U.S. housing market. The number of contracts to buy previously owned homes jumped 6.6 per cent in August, more than expected. Pending sales are seen as a good indicator of where the housing market will be within a month or two.



Small is good

Canadian small business are holding their own during the recession, according to a report from CIBC. The number of bank requests involving small and medium-sized enterprises over the 12 months prior to July was down 6.1 per cent from the same period the year before.



► The U.S. economy is really under way, something that's not all in the past. The U.S. shed another 263,000 jobs in September, far more than economists had expected. Australia's unemployment rate hit 5.4 per cent. That might not seem like much, but it's higher than it was in 2007, and it's higher than it was in 2008. That's not good news for the economy and the job market, especially if they're not even counted as unemployed.

THE BAD NEWS

Labour pains

If the economy is really under way, something that's not all in the past. The U.S. shed another 263,000 jobs in September, far more than economists had expected. Australia's unemployment rate hit 5.4 per cent. That might not seem like much, but it's higher than it was in 2007, and it's higher than it was in 2008. That's not good news for the economy and the job market, especially if they're not even counted as unemployed.

September, losing some of the positive gains it had made over the summer. The index fell to 53.1 from 54.1 in August, as analysts continued to see a decreasing job market.

U.S. JOB LOSSES -263K



Factory fall
Demand for manufactured goods fell 0.8 per cent in August, according to the U.S. Commerce Department. The decline in orders to U.S. factories is the first consecutive month of gains falling below zero for the industry. In a separate report, the Institute for Supply Management's index of manufacturing activity for September also marked a surprise drop.

Consumer despair

The American consumer seems to be slipping back into depression. The Conference Board confidence index unexpectedly tumbled in

BY JASON KERRY — It's a safe bet you've never heard of Oliver Stone. But if this past week has any indicators, Australia's central bank governor is either the best thing to happen to the global economy or the worst. "Green shoots" is a harbinger of economic doom.

From the good news: On Tuesday, Stone made the surprise move of adding up Australia's key interest rate a quarter percentage point to 3.25 per cent—the first central bank rate in a developed economy to raise the worldwide recession began. Investors were ecstatic. But, British analysts argued, was clear evidence of a global recovery. Within an hour of opening, North American markets jumped more than two per cent. As one headline screamed, in what has to be the first "Wall Street jumps on Australia rate hike."

No offense to our friends Down Under, but the notion that a stronger economy in Australia could herald a recovery is, say, the U.S. is as silly as saying Canada's fortunes depend what happens south of the border. Actually, it's the other: Australia doesn't even make the list of America's top 10 trading partners, putting it behind countries like the Netherlands, Brazil and even Venezuela, with less than 1 per cent of total trade (Canada, of course, is number one). And never mind that the move by Australia came even as markets digested some disappointing data about rising unemployment and falling consumer confidence in the U.S. In this rally, only the good news counts.

But there was another group cheering the move: the Asian central bank, and if they're right, all the optimism in the world can't make it enough. From the economic governments began pumping \$200 trillion of stimulus into the global economy, gold bugs have warned that a period of hyper-inflation looms on the horizon. Think Zimbabwe, they say, simply stroking their beards. And when it happens, the only safe haven from the storm will be the shiny metal. So when Stone made the step of raising rates, even by a tiny amount, to head off inflation, gold investors saw it as proof the big one is coming. On Tuesday, an ounce of gold soared to an all-time high of \$1,061.04.

Which right? Who knows. One thing is clear—uncertainty reigns. The simple fact that a single Australian rate decision played such a pivotal role in global markets and commodity prices says a lot about how hard it's become to gauge where the economy is headed. But more than that, it shows how desperate investors are for positive signs of recovery, no matter how nebulous, to keep the rally going. ■

OVERDRAWN by Jason Logan

CLARIFICATION



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YOUR SMALL BUSINESS that fighting spirit

RIDERS OF THE RECOVERY

As the Canadian economy inches its way up and out of the recession, the outlook of small business owners is burning brighter.

After a summer of worry and discontent, business confidence survey findings from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) reflected the true glimmers of hope in September, when its monthly Business Optimism index climbed to 65.4 for August – its highest level in two years.

Confidence Comes First

According to past Business Optimism results, index levels normally range between 65 and 75 when the economy is growing.

"Businesses are recovering quite well," says Ted Mallen, CFIB's chief economist and vice president of research. "Although many have had to make financing decisions to focus on costs and postpone some of their most expensive capital investment plans." He says results demonstrate an overall improvement across industries and regions, and suggest the first tentative steps toward economic recovery.

The economic crisis prompted the organization to update the frequency of its surveys. Mallen says, to get a real-time sense of what's happening now. A decision was made to survey members monthly rather than quarterly, to try and spot the all important inflection point – "that point in time when things stop getting worse."

Indeed, since 98% of Canadian businesses are companies with fewer than 100 employees, this kind of company-wide done economic outlook is gaining clout as a leading indicator of what may come next. Mallen has found the rest of the South of Canada and Bay Street analysts, who are going more serious attention to what Canadian entrepreneurs are thinking.

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CIBC is the only bank to offer a business account with unlimited transactions* withdrawals, bill payments and account transfers – all for one low monthly fee.

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For what matters.

Talent, effort and advice fuel business growth

As a business owner, you know that growing your business and keeping it running effectively requires time and effort – and lots of it. You also know that you simply can't be an expert on every aspect of running your business – you need the right advice to help make that time and effort as effective as possible.

Recent industry research demonstrates that getting advice on key financial matters is top of mind for Canadian business owners. For example, advice on cash flow management ranked almost at highly as advice on business growth when it comes to topics that are on the minds of business owners.

"CIBC advisors across Canada are always in conversation with our business clients, and the one topic that clients are consistently looking for advice on is how to bring all of their finances together into a clear, consolidated plan," says Colette Delaney, Senior Vice President, CIBC Retail Markets. "As economic conditions have changed, business owners have become even more focused on managing their cash flow and looking for opportunities to reduce their expenses."

While your business finances can seem complicated at times, there are some simple guidelines that can bring greater clarity to your finances, optimize your monthly cash flow, and help you address key financial issues to help you grow your business.

Meet with an Advisor

Research shows that while a majority of business owners feel they need advice on topics like cash flow management, only a small percentage actually take action to get the advice they need. "Having a conversation with an advisor about where you want your business to go is an important first step towards putting a financial plan in place that will support you towards your business goals," says Delaney.

A business banking advisor can help you to look holistically at your finances, and can offer tools to help you better manage cash flow, optimize your borrowing, and address other aspects of your finances.

As economists forecast continued growth in the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises across Canada, there is an increased focus on meeting the needs of this market. CIBC is investing in new branches and investing more in their

business banking activities, making it easier to find a local advisor across their branch network.

"We are responding to the growth in the business market by making further investments in our advisory capability, which is helping business clients across Canada to take control of their finances and achieve what matters most to them," notes Delaney.

Look for products designed to save you money

The market to attract business clients is competitive, and that means continued innovations to earn your business.

With the recent launch of the new CIBC Unlimited Business Operating Account™, CIBC is the only bank to offer a business account with unlimited monthly transactions* such as withdrawals, bill payments, and account transfers for one, low monthly fee of \$35.

"The new CIBC Unlimited Business Operating Account is the most exciting development in the business banking market in some time," said Delaney.

"Business owners can now benefit from a predictable monthly fee, which helps save time and money," added Delaney. "Spending time thinking about how many checks you've written and how much that will cost you at the end of the month is not going to help grow your business – that time can be better invested elsewhere by taking advantage of a predictable monthly fee offered by the new CIBC Unlimited Business Operating Account."

Put your plan into action

With the right advice to guide you, and the right products in place designed to simplify business banking, you can now start working towards your plan and directing your focus towards growing your business. Having a plan in place that makes sense for your business will make your efforts to grow your business more effective and efficient.

"It's an exciting time for business owners in Canada," adds Delaney. "While the economy has changed, growth projections remain strong for this market. Innovations such as new bank accounts that simplify monthly banking, and expanded access to advisory services are the result of an increased investment in meeting the unique needs of business clients."



For what matters.

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YOUR SMALL BUSINESS: your money

FINANCING YOUR RISE OR REBOUND

When it takes financial capital to grow or rebuild, funding your plans is about good cash management and relationship building.

Trimming, economizing, extending and fighting to keep every possible dollar you can out of the hands of your competition.

While the last 12 months have been all about survival mode for many small businesses, the upside is that entrepreneurship is always about maximizing cash and the discipline of lean times can reap long-term rewards.

Keeping working capital fluid will always remain among your top concerns as winning the confidence of bankers, suggest small business financing experts. Cash is an absolute necessity when it comes to testing new business opportunities and getting yourself in a good light with financial institutions and other lenders.

"When your sales volume goes down, so does your working capital, and without that, you lose a lot of your flexibility as a business," says Edith Minton, executive vice president of financing and consulting with the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) in Montreal. The bank, a governmental lender that provides long-term financing to small and medium-sized businesses, issued a record \$1 billion in loans between April and the end of June 2009 — 37% more than the same period a year earlier and the largest quarterly increase in the organization's history.

Much of that loan demand has been from entrepreneurs seeking working capital, says Minton, drawing BDC's attention to support entrepreneurs faced with capital needs under conditions as tough economy.

A First-Hand view

"What better use of individuals is there as far as the Canadian economy to launch a sale and grow it," says Howard Griefeld, vice president and general manager of small business services for Ameriquest Express Canada & International, which conducts across small business branch work surveys that track entrepreneurs' sentiments. "What's true about working capital is that supporting with the small business operation is they are clear this equity to the market. It's a first-hand view."

And that view is an overview, says Griefeld, according to his company's most recent of Small Business Monitor studies. While more than half of small business owners surveyed say they had experienced a slowdown in their business, including 31% who characterized the slowdown as "significant", they have been fighting back by increasing new ideas to be stronger and more competitive.

"They're really in a race to be as flexible, nimble enough to change and adapt their business models — it's like a question mark on a small canvas," says Griefeld. "It all comes back to the entrepreneur's personality. They are the best ones at identifying possibilities and being able to shift out the next big thing."

The Future Rides on "Small"

Some economists are predicting the next sustained wave of job and innovation coming from small businesses in Canada and other developed economies as fast ways to tap into the future growth and needs of emerging markets like China, India and Brazil.

"Highly entrepreneurial small and medium-sized businesses will be a key source of job creation," writes Scott Branson, senior vice president and chief economist at World Economic Forum, in his September Economic Director's report. "As a time when the auto sector and other traditional mass financing industries are shedding jobs, new entrepreneurs focused on environmental remediation, global infrastructure development and emerging market demands have the potential for rapid sustained growth."

Small or medium? Measuring up business size

Determining what's really getting the attention, the size of a business can be defined in many ways: overall sales or shipments, annual gross or net revenue, capacity to borrow or number of employees.

According to the Canadian Bankers Association glossary, banks define small businesses as those with authorized credit limits of \$500,000 or less. Industry Canada typically uses a definition based on the number of employees: a firm is considered small if it has fewer than 100 employees, and medium if it has up to 499 employees. A firm with one to four employees is defined as a micro-enterprise.

The term SME (for small and medium-sized enterprise) is used to refer to all businesses with fewer than 500 employees.



Keeping Cash on your Balance Sheet

Having available cash allows financial institutions and other lenders to see you with confidence, says Minton, and also let you take advantage of buying opportunities in your market. She offers a few strategies that can help keep your balance sheet stronger:

- **Avoid financing tied costs with working capital.** While it can seem attractive to pay all purchases with cash to own a share "You and cash", long-term loans or leasing works a better way to pay for fixed costs. "With cash in hand, you can use it to your advantage today and do things like negotiate volume discounts with suppliers — which ultimately can help cover off your longer-term interest costs."
- **Barter to increase your working capital.** You can't generate revenue if you can't afford the inventory, services or staffing to supply your clients and grow your market share. Set your increased revenue against to pay off the loan.
- **Reinvest your first sales.** "Use your sales to learn," says Minton. Business owners can benefit from the sales working capital to improve their plan, invest, pursue new export markets or sign their first strategies.

- **Use friends and reference bankers.** Whether you're looking for help from financial institutions or other lenders at small business, success lies in the strength of your business plan, your ability to pay your bills, and your efforts to foster a good relationship.

Nearly three quarters (73%) of small and medium-sized enterprises use a bank as their main financial institution, according to the Canadian Bankers Association, and about two thirds (65%) use the same financial institution for both personal and business banking. The defining factor for satisfaction, access to credit and a fast-to-face relationship.

- **Trust your banker as an advisor.** It's a double-edged sword to have a commercial bank manager who understands your business and works with similar types of companies. Most banks have earned in their knowledge of certain sectors or business specialties.
- **Always be prepared.** When you're asking for advice or credit, carry a summary of your business plan, organizational chart and most recent financial statements, and leave your banker off the hour.
- **Don't give up.** Lenders have different criteria for how they select the risk they are willing to take. If you're turned down, ask why, make adjustments if you can, test the market and keep trying.

Sources of Financing

Small and medium-sized businesses go where the money is, by tapping into a wide range of financing sources.

Angel investment	15.1%	Business credit cards	44.4%
Government bank up to \$500	10.0%	Discounted accounts	33.7%
Loans from friends and relatives	34.2%	Personal credit cards	50.9%
Personal loans	33.2%	Personal on assets	56.9%
Leasing	30.4%	Supplier credit	51.9%
Personal lines of credit	45.2%		

Source: 2008 Survey Bankers Association of Entrepreneurship Risk Financial Institutions, Strategic Consulting, Canadian Bankers Association, 2008

Just the Facts

- 78% of businesses in Canada employ fewer than 100 people
- Between 2002 and 2006, 130,000 new small businesses, on average, were created in Canada each year
- Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees account for about 35% of Canada's GDP

Source: Industry Canada

Fact: There are more than 50 million MasterCard® PayPass™ cards worldwide.

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BANKS' BEST SMALL-BUSINESS SWAG

So, they're not handing out loasters, but Canada's major banks are wooing small businesses by offering new tools and business basics. Here's a sampling of help and advice you can get—mostly free—to build your business.

CIBC

Unleashed transactions. This fall, the bank launches a new lineup of business bank accounts, including an operating account with unlimited monthly transactions. "Business owners have told us they value the simplicity of a single, low monthly fee to cover all of their day-to-day banking," says Catherine Delaney, senior vice president, CIBC Royal Bank. For a monthly fee of \$15, it includes withdrawal, account transfers, bill payments, no additional handling fee for up to 100 deposits, among other features.

BMO Bank of Montreal

Business coach products. In collaboration with PROFIT magazine, this bank draws on experts in a number of fields to provide the information and advice to run your small business better. Now also available in French. **Contingency planning guide:** Get your backup plan ready and search the website for the BMO Guide to Business Contingency Planning to download this handy reference. The bank's research suggests that 82% of Canadian small businesses do not have a backup or contingency plan in place, for example, in response to spread of an influenza outbreak.

www.bmo.com

RBC Insurance Group

Risk assessment guide. "The RBC Insurance Business Risk Management Guide helps you identify nine key business risks in four categories: providing financial and insurance strategies you can use to protect your organization. Quick assessment tools help you see what your business could be more vulnerable.

www.rbcinsurance.com/firststep/

Online advice center. RBC Royal Bank's recently launched Advice Center, for business owners adds new features each month, an aspect the managing director, making business plans for small businesses, and other general resources.

www.rbcadvicecenter.com/business/

resources

National Bank of Canada

SME awards. Since \$750,000 in prizes and publicity are doled out each year to recognize the successes of business-leading companies in Quebec through National Bank's SME Awards. "While this year's awards are closed, pick up business tips from the case studies of winners, or be nominated. **How 5 Entrepreneur's** survey this fall, results of the survey will be shared on the challenges of the future will be shared on a video presentation release with the Federation of Quebec Chambers of Commerce (FCCQ).

www.nbc.ca

Seeing angels:

The real-life dragons' den

While the well of institutional venture capital dried up significantly through the recession, the rise of angel investors—wealthy individuals who put up their own money for a stake in a startup—has been one of the emerging "good news" stories in small-business finance. And now, an increasing number of angel investors are engineering themselves into networks or groups to find deals, share research and pool investment capital.

"It's a phenomena we've seen grow over the last six or seven years, where you see any number of angel investors get together to look at opportunities, sharing their knowledge and expertise," says Bryan Watson, executive director of the National Angel Capital Organization (NACAO) in Toronto. "People think of that television show, *Dragons' Den*. In principle, it's similar—although without the drama."

Watson cites 2008 estimates that angels funded some \$2.2 billion of small-business investments in Canada. But, to get used up money you need to show initial sales or commitments or collaboration with a major customer. "Angels look for a product in development, or the physical thing—that has initial traction with customers, or ideas that have proven that somebody is willing to pay."

Enthusiastic leadership, alone is not enough, says Watson. "They'll want to see an expansion and learn how a company that is compelling."

Research the investors you are presenting to. Know their preferences and choose ones who understand your business and whose experience and contacts will be able to help you. "If you're going to approach someone, invest their own after-tax dollars," says Watson, "you'd better get your head around what motivates them."




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Inspired
Entrepreneurs >

When choosing a financial institution, 31% of small and medium-sized companies base their choice on credit services; 62% chose their institution for non-credit banking services.

Source: Council on Business Associations

TD Canada Trust

New website alert: You don't have to be a genius to log on and join a capital to live services, services and secure financial advice on managing small business. You can ask questions, access real-time profit and download resource guides and reference material. Opening pages include protecting your business against fraud and having your unique selling proposition. Be sure to check out how to support cash flow, get government grants and secure innovative financing options. www.tdcanadatrust.com/smallbusiness

Scotiabank

Get growing alerts: Register to see the online business toolset www.getgrowingforbusiness.com/inspire, which includes a cash flow analyzer and a step-by-step business plan agreement that lets you rent and download reports.

Book smart: Scotia Small Business Banking executive Kelli McManis and David Wilson co-authored *Get Growing: Keys to Unlocking the Potential of Your Small Business*, featuring best practices from a number of entrepreneurs they spot during a five-month store-visit tour.

Credit Unions

Mean money show: Canada's credit unions pooled resources to highlight that small business banking services and build a content-filled website with expert advice, webinars and chat areas. Look for their public area called Wise Words! (Harold Don't) described as "the business book by business owners for business owners." It offers more expert wisdom from the experiences of 302 owner operators. Ask for it at any participating credit union branch or CU.ca/wise on the website www.creditunionsolutions.com/wise/brand

Attracting
angels for
growth

Company: Wellco, Guelph, Ont.
Business: E-commerce

The recession has been pretty good to Ali Asaria, founder and chief executive officer of Wellco, which has grown to become Canada's largest online health and beauty store since he launched the company in 2007. In July, Wellco closed a \$1.1-million private financing round led by an angel investing group—the second such infusion of private equity since its inception.

"We have a great relationship with our local bank but, in reality, it's very hard to get that level of financing for a company that hasn't existed for at least two years, so we couldn't really look to them as a source of capital," says Asaria, a computer engineer who has worked with IBM. And it's not just about money: gaining the expertise and connections of experienced angels, including eBay Canada managing director Jordan Banks, is part of the plan.

Aside from a customer-focused marketing model that offers free shipping within Canada on any one order ("We'll deliver a tube of lipstick to Niagara," says Asaria), he'd written thank-you notes ("We love how you wrote this"), he added, and more product selection than any physical pharmacy (19,000 items and counting), the company's business model has always focused on cash flow. Says Asaria: "We had revenue from day one; we were selling things."

In a fast ride, the business plan has marched along the way. "When we started, we thought our target audience was going to be young moms," says Asaria, adding a cue from the Grocery Gateway model to serve local winery who don't ship. "It turns out that 65% of our orders were coming from women ages 30 to 45, including young office wives. The challenge remained. I spent a lot of my time now just learning about what people want."



YOUR SMALL BUSINESS:

retail checks in

SMALL SHOPS:
GO BIG ON SERVICE

Breced for declining sales since the onset of the recession, more small and mid-sized retailers began to expect brighter days in August, when they predicted growth rather than weaker performance, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business's Business Barometer index.

"They can certainly be worried as a bellwether for consumer spending, since more than 80% of all Canadian retailers have just one store, according to 32 online and fewer than 50 employees, according to the Retail Council of Canada. But now the tide will be to turn the owner-operator operators into successful sales for the end-of-the-summer holiday selling season."

Make Service Your Advantage

Karen Gruff, president of Gruff Retail in Oakville, Ont., one of North America's leading retail training and development companies, has some specific suggestions for retail sales staff for the end of the summer.

Begin with a recognition of the advantage that every small merchant can have over its large retail competitors. "Service," says Gruff. "They really can't and need to provide a far deeper level of service."

Evaluate Service and Satisfaction Often
Independence can win the competition in any "high touch" retail store that requires a high degree of personal knowledge or interaction with the customer, he says. But that also came to be using. Be critical in assessing how high you rate your service score. "Use any independent check they do provide great service, when in fact they don't."

The solution: Ask your customers — often — how you are doing. Learn carefully in the summer.

Learn from the Big Guys, then Innovate

"Independent retailers are being dismantled and hard working. They really do want to succeed, and they have a lot of very good ideas," says Gruff, who took part in a recent research project of the Retail Council of Canada and Scotiabank Small Business last year, addressing a series of town hall sessions to hear the challenges of Canadian independent retailers.

"The challenge is a lack of information and resources," he says. "They need to get out of their minds and learn from the big guys we're doing."

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PICK 5 TO BOOST HOLIDAY SALES

Commit to just five of these tactics to hone your skills as a retailer, and you'll generate sales and increase performance, promises the *Retailer's Guide to a Successful Christmas*, compiled by Graft Retail of Oakville, Ont. And remember, attitude can impact sales by as much as 25% – so above all, stay "up!"

- 1. Set a goal.** Give these top spots for sales, display and signage. Don't run out and don't do secondarily.
- 2. Know your inventory.** Know your inventory targets each week to keep the cash flowing. If you bought a "toy," reduce it early. While holiday sales are getting low, when I get caught with excess inventory on Dec. 31.
- 3. Be aggressive.** Your first markdown should be your best. Set a timeline for additional markdowns and let it be. Consider "progressive" discounting based on multiple purchases.
- 4. No sale is even first.** Sell your open-ended return policy because a poor return policy equals poor sales.
- 5. For the holidays** sell at the speed of light to both the customer and the store. Make sure you can handle multiple customers at one time.
- 6. When else can they get this?** When about a self-gift? Holiday entertaining needs? Point out discounted merchandise.
- 7. Merchandise your cash deals with items at \$5 to \$10 or less** that can be sold as stocking stuffers, cool additives or consumables. Make sure customers will.
- 8. Be different from everyone else** and let your independent nature shine. Be accessible, helpful and be your Bud. Love business and build your email list.
- 9. Difficult customers** can't always be difficult. Choose your attitude. Enough so. Take a deep breath and apologize.
- 10. Note what customers want** that you don't have and put it on your to-do list. Ask for an list several times. Can you get more?



L4-3E-HL1-7T-4S File them high and watch them fly! Keep in view of your audience as you beat display case, and invest in great signage. Tell them up.

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• **HILL 151** **W** **151** **W** Don't swing on staff during peak hours

Too few staff means poor service and that makes for poor sales.

Going "hands-free" at the cash:

In retail, it can pay to be "hands-off" at the cash when it comes to providing quick service to time-driven customers.

Over the past few years, MasterCard has led the way in introducing Canadian consumers to contactless payment technology in stores where quick service is essential – as PayPal has been adopted as the standard in use by large gas stations, grocery store chains and quick-service restaurants.

Now, the system is being rolled out to help smaller merchants in cash-heavy categories like newsstands, music stores, dry cleaners and parking lot operations, allowing them to offer customers the convenience of contactless payment.

"Any time a small business can streamline its payment processes [through reducing cash management costs] and improve customer service, it gains an edge—which we know smaller merchants can never have enough of," says Annette Robertson, a spokesperson for Marient Solutions, one of the merchant services companies that supports PayPass in Canada.

MasterCard PayPass uses radio frequency technology to transmit payment details wirelessly between a customer's PayPass card or device and the MasterCard network. The customer just waves a card or taps it on a terminal, and there's usually no need to sign for purchases under \$25, making it a super speedy way to pay.

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GREEN MEANS GO: ACTION ESSENTIALS

Being green is good business, whether it's creating recyclable products, forest-friendly packaging, or using renewable energy. Think of sustainability as your competitive advantage.

Whether you see "green" as potentially profitable eco-economics for your business, or as an expression of good corporate karma, the time and money you invest in sustainable practices can save you resources and win you customers.

Here are just a few ideas to prompt thoughts about adding sustainability to your business strategy:

Involve your employees. No one is more in tune with your operations than your employees. They will help you identify waste in your systems and processes. Asking for volunteers to form an employee-run "green committee" gives them a chance to make a meaningful difference at their workplace.

Survey your employees. From the printing and office supplies you buy, to the courier and transportation companies you work with, who you do business with can make you greener – or less green. Consider to consider the environmental policies and practices of your vendors.

Design for responsibility. Consider the environmental impacts and costs of products throughout their life cycle, from production to use and disposal.

Be ecologically durable. Put a priority on environmental and energy conservation to achieve savings over time. An energy audit can identify how you can save money on lighting, heating, air conditioning and equipment maintenance.

Be greener wise. Commercial buildings are among the largest energy consumers and waste generators. Whether you are a tenant or own your buildings, ask for energy efficient upgrades and recycling stations, and pool your efforts with neighbouring owners and tenants. New to Canada, green office leases are standard for building owners and tenants and show them to conserve energy and keep up with energy trends.

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lower than the national average. Small businesses (28%) use social networking to promote their business, according to the 2009 Harris/Demo survey for BMO. Only 18% use these sites to sell their products, and 14% are using them to test new ideas.

Source: BMO's Montreal Small Business Opinion Poll 2009



YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

technology

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA

To tweet or not to tweet? Social media sites like Twitter, Facebook and web blogs present a great opportunity to connect with customers and promote your business.

Jens Skoss, a communications strategist at Vancouver video and social media production studio Giant Ant Media, meets with hundreds of small business owners – in person and via video conference – through seminars such as those run by Small Business BC, where he puts across these messages to help demystify the role of social media as a small business marketing tool.

"The small businesses that really go social media are the ones who are already doing it well," says Skoss. "These are the people who are already active in their communities, screen their networking efforts – it's just an online extension of this, and another way of connecting to people."

"If you can't maintain your social networking messages on a daily basis, use the tools available that let you be more effective, such as batch processing, which allows you to schedule events ahead of time," says Skoss.

"You will need all the basic tools of marketing, knowing who your potential customers are, the position you have in the market – nothing changes," says Skoss. This can help define your efforts on the networks your customers are most likely to be in, whether that's Facebook, Twitter or popular youth sites like myspace.

"You can get into social media marketing on a shoestring – most of the tools and sites are free, which is a boon for micro-businesses and sub-segments. The trade-off of course is your time. For companies that can't dedicate marketing staff to manage blog messages or reply to social media site feedback, take a look from time to time and outsource or assemble a social networking team. Many of these high-profile events and blogs – from Disney to Obama – are run by trained staff."

"The ones that can make you feel not free and not being creative," says Skoss.



Tech buzz

HP Extends 0% Financing

An Canadian small business owner sensitive to the tough decisions in a struggling economy, HP has extended and arranged its 0% financing programs to help them stay competitive by investing in technology while preserving capital. There's a 36-month Equipment Recovery Lease option, and a second lease financing option of 0% for 36 months structured like a renewable lease. Transactions between \$5,000 and \$150,000 qualify.

"Unified" Simplified

The focus on "unified communications" in IT circles is gaining favour with vendors like Cisco because of the small business market and the role of Network Software Communications System. So what does it mean? In some cases, it means that Unified Communications video, Gametech research director Ted Chamberlain says, "[UC] is a simple system, is delivering video data and takes over the same network – usually an IP network." The biggest takeaway for the analyst office: Know your current per person network and communications costs before you buy anything new, and most ending up with digital content services with the different services you deal with for phone, broadband and networking.

Shared Plans Can Save Mobile Costs

Small business on the go depend on cellphones and smartphones to collaborate and stay in touch. To help save on the expense of individual plans, several carriers now have offers for very small businesses on pool, share and save on mobility costs. The Bell Small Business Share plans pool service times and long distance allowances for up to 15 members and, as of July, Rogers rolled out its new SmallTeam service with a combined data and voice sharing plan for small business groups as small as four starting from \$50 a month per person.

Giving it a shot

tough times inspire innovation

You decide to go ahead with that new website, change your product line or upgrade your customer database to support your sales efforts – every little innovation matters to a small business owner determined to stay in the game.

Whether it's investing in productivity tools or product development, the recession has not significantly cut back the desire to innovate among Canadian small businesses for which innovation and/or research and development applies, suggests a Small Business Monitor survey released in September by Atlantic Express.

In fact, while a sluggish economy did put some businesses' R&D plans on hold, most small business owners (55%) say the recession has forced them to accelerate their plans and renew their focus on innovation. And the survey suggests that this is particularly true of bootstrapped business owners aged 55 and over: nearly two-thirds of those respondents (63%) say the recession has made them step up rather than slow down when it comes to innovation.

"What we see is that, it's still tough out there, but a majority of small businesses are refusing to back down in the face of a recession," says Howard Grishel, vice-president and general manager, Small Business Services, Atlantic Express Canada & International.

The survey was conducted in June, by Angus Reid Strategies, among a randomly selected, representative sample of 300 Canadian small business owners who currently have two to 100 employees.

For these small businesses, innovation was seen as key to their continued competitiveness, and owners expect that their investments will make their company more profitable (90%), better able to attract new customers (87%) or will improve products (87%).



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of Canada's Top 100
Employers in 2010



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Wholesale



Retail



Advanced Technologies

Agrium is the only company that crosses the entire crop input value chain. Our three diversified business units – and our head office in Calgary – have one focus – **nourishing a growing world**.

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With operating facilities across North America, including plants near Edmonton, Saskatoon and Calgary, Wholesale manufactures three vital crop nutrients: Nitrogen, Potash and Phosphate.

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Operating more than 600 farm centres across Canada, the U.S., Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, Retail focuses on getting our crop nutrients, crop protection products, seed and services into the hands of growers to optimize their yields and returns.

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With operations based in North America, Agrium Advanced Technologies offers premium environmentally beneficial controlled-release fertilizer and related products to the horticulture, agriculture, professional turf and consumer lawn and garden markets.

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A MACLEAN'S SPECIAL REPORT

CANADA'S ★ TOP 100 ★ EMPLOYERS

Even in tough times, these companies know what it takes to get the most out of their staff and attract the best talent out there



BY JOE CHIDLEY • The talent war is over. Talent here. Or at least it might seem that way to anybody who's been watching the ranks of the jobless swell over the past year. How many of us, if we haven't already lost our jobs, don't know somebody close to us who has? Even among the employed, the elite, the glory days of the real estate—the yearly raises and big-bucks bonuses and company retreats—have given way to layoffs, pay cuts and creeping pessimism. And that's worrisome. The unemployment rate in Canada is soaring once again, to 15.5 per cent, the highest since the late 1980s. In the United States, the rate

Maclean's
The Top 100 List 80
How to attract the best and brightest in tough times 90
Public vs. Private: The war for workers 94
Can a little fear in the workplace be good for business? 100

just trading parties and the optimism of the financial meltdown that saved this crisis is nearly 10 per cent. And here's the really bad news: few observers think the recovery, when

it begins, will manufacture jobs faster any time soon. Sure, U.S. Federal Reserve chair Ben Bernanke has declared that the recession is "very likely" over. But at Harvard professor Kenneth Froot, former chief economist for the International Monetary Fund, recently noted, "If you're looking for a job, it sure doesn't feel like the recession is over."

For the bad news about jobs doesn't tell the whole story. Most good? Then just take a look at this year's list of Canada's Top 100 Employers.

For the ninth year running, Maclean's has



It only makes sense that the place
known for getting you the job
is a great place to have a job.



georgebrown.ca

shared with Toronto publisher Mediacy to bring you the country's most comprehensive independent study of workplace benefits. Mediacy managing editor Richard Weiss and his team began by reviewing the recruitment histories of more than 75,000 employees, and then invited some 16,000 of them—along with another 8,000 organizations in industries the editors wanted to examine more closely—to complete an application process that entailed an in-depth review of human resources practices and business operations. This year, more than 2,600 organizations applied—up 1.7 percent from last year, and the most applications in the history of the Mediacy survey.

For employers, then, the challenges posed by the eight key areas—physical work

place, work atmosphere, health, financial and family financial situation and time off, employee communications, performance management, training and skills development, and community involvement—(see page 10) are, including guides for each criterion, are available free on Mediacy's job-search site, EBC.ca.

The results are a revealing glimpse into the latest workplace trends—and into how Canada's best employers are making a difference for their employees. After all, even if the job landscape is tough, the competition among employers to attract top talent didn't disappear along with GDP growth. And the recession didn't make retaining motivated employees any less important to a productive workplace. Yes, the resources at hand have in some cases diminished, but creative organizations, both public and private, are finding ways to survive and inspire their workers even in tough times.

EMPLOYEES ARE LESS CONCERNED WITH WELL-STOCKED LOUNGES AND FOOSBALL TABLES— THE NEW KEYWORD IS 'STABILITY'

What's clear is that those tough times have led to shifts in priorities. Take a look at this year's list and you'll see less emphasis on fringe benefits and lifestyle perks. Well-stocked employee lounges and foosball tables have given way to more sober considerations—pension plans, in-house training programs,

shared purchase schemes. The keyword for employers these days is stability. "Compared to previous years, we do see a shifting focus in the programs and benefits offered by this year's winning employers," says Verónica Stabily and continuity in workplace programs have become defining characteristics of our best employers, with the study even taking a back seat to traditional benefit programs that make a real difference in the lives of working Canadians."

It makes sense, then, that the public sector has become an increasingly attractive place for Canadians to work. (Thirty-two public sector and non-profit organizations are on the Top 100 list for this year.) While the rest of the economy remains in turmoil, government spending in Canada has been charged with kick-starting the economy—and the public money isn't just going to build bridges and highways. Between July 2008 and July 2009, the highest increases in weekly wages in Canada occurred among workers in education (6.9 per cent), public administration (5.1 per cent) and health care (3.4 per cent), while health wages decreased in the private sector—damaged areas of retail trade (1.0 per cent), accommodation and food services (1.9 per cent), and manufacturing—where pay dropped by a whopping 3.5 per cent.

A similar distinction is emerging when it comes to benefits. Public sector workers typically enjoy excellent medical and dental benefits, maternity leave top up and flexible retirement and health plans. (For example, Top 100 employer Statistics Canada often had coverage for retirees.) And government offers another perk that fewer and fewer private-sector workers enjoy, a traditional pension plan. Many businesses have adopted so-called defined contribution

pension plans, where payouts are determined by the amount available from combined employee/employer contributions, the public sector, meanwhile, continues to offer the more stable and generous defined-benefit plans, where payouts are determined by a set formula. Fewer than a quarter of private-sector employers have access to a defined-benefit pension, while more than 40 per cent of government workers do—leading some commentators to worry over the emergence of two classes of employees in Canada.

But as the businesses on the Top 100 list show, there are still plenty of private employers who have adopted progressive workplace practices that meet the needs of the public service. More and more are topping up



THE GREAT LITTLE BOX CO. opens its books to encourage loyalty from its employees

maternity leave benefits. Others are finding ways to make life outside the office easier, with flexible scheduling and work-from-home arrangements. Accounting firm KPMG has a program to grant up to \$20,000 for adoption; Procter & Gamble offers academic scholarships for children of employees both active and retired. It's not all about money, either—some "benefits" cost nothing at all. The Great Little Box Co., a Vancouver-based manufacturer, opens its books to all employees, in a simple way to build trust and encourage loyalty.

Finally, it's good to know that not all the flashy perks have gone the way of Lehman Bros. Employees at Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries have access to a trout pond and a driving range. And if you're one of the lucky 982 who work for Vancouver-based Mountain Equipment Co-op, you can participate in on-site yoga classes or get away from it all in a private-camp room. After all, especially in times as bleak as these, who wouldn't use a little break once in a while? ■

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The new Dalhousie University Corporate Residency MBA program does just that, and has attracted exceptional students and engaged too employers in the private, public and non profit sectors. Over 35 employer partners have signed on to this new path to recruitment that promises to deliver the right candidate for the team, the job and the organization.

How does it work? "To fill our employer partners' needs, we are recruiting the best students from every field of study," says program director Scott Comber. "These students are personable, passionate and positive. In addition to having demonstrated leadership and academic abilities, they embody solid ethics and a capacity for innovation." Employer partners benefit from the program's

application process, which places a strong emphasis on a personal interview to determine the candidate's employability. This process provides pre-screened candidates for the employer partners. Employer partners were involved in creating the program, which ensures a balance between a comprehensive world view and sound, relevant skills. An integrated academic business curriculum is combined with a focus on personal and professional effectiveness, leadership skills, and a concentration in marketing, finance, leadership or international business.

"We're attracting students who want to manage with integrity and get things done," says Comber. "They are excited about the exceptional paid residency opportunity and the innovative curriculum. Employers are delighted to find a rich field of pre-screened high-talent MBA candidates. It's a unique program that gets the right people together faster."

"My class of 2012 has been an exceptional group of employees who have made a significant contribution to our organization."

Chris LaDuke, Current Student, Corporate Residency MBA

"The Dal/AON partnership represents a best-in-class win-win."

Chuck Wilson, Executive Vice-President and Leader - Eastern Canada and Aon, Global Canada, Aon Field Service Inc.



Robert Quinlan, Human Resources



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For more information visit dalmba.ca



AT BAYER, employees can unwind—and rock out—by playing a little Guitar Hero on the Nintendo Wii in the employee lounge.

THE TOP 100



They offer tuition subsidies, parental leave top-ups, flexible hours, even private rooms for napping. Here's what it takes to be one of Canada's top employers. BY RICHARD YERKMA

The employers, listed below, are not ranked and are classified by industry. They are presented in alphabetical order.

GO indicates number of Canadian full-time employees.

★ CONSUMER SERVICES

CARSWELL

Publisher, Toronto. Leadership program had over 80 per cent of participants promoted upon completion; compassionate leave top-

up payments to 95 per cent of salary for eight weeks; \$5,000 in adoption assistance per child. (645)

COMPASS GROUP CANADA LTD.

Food services company, Mississauga, Ont. Employees start at three weeks vacation, focused training programs to help women advance into management level positions; compassionate care top-up benefits to 80 per cent of salary for six weeks. (1,775)

DEELEY HARLEY-DAVIDSON CANADA
Motorcycle distributor, Richmond, B.C. Discounts on bikes; some models can be borrowed, paid for in full for volunteer work; four leave top-ups to 75 per cent for 52 weeks. (775)

FAIRMONT HOTELS INC.
Luxury hotels & resorts, Toronto. Job opportunities around the world including the Caribbean; discounted rates on the company's

hotels and resorts for employees and their families and friends; defined contribution pension plan. (5,645)

GAY LEA FOODS CO-OPERATIVE LTD.
Dairy products producer, Mississauga, Ont. Profit sharing and share purchase plans available to all workers; full health benefits for missing autism spectrum; flexible work options. (4,675)



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CARSWELL



THOMSON REUTERS



The option to buy vacation days—and a weekly beer card—helped earn Toronto's Hill & Knowlton a spot on the list this year.

LOISLAW COS. LTD.

Grocery store chain, Brampton, Ont. Online and in-house training programs and tuition subsidies up to \$1,200; net leave top-ups to 75 per cent of salary for 17 weeks (1/200)

L'ORÉAL CANADA INC.

Cosmetics company, Montreal. Excellent on-site daycare; downtown workplace has coffee bar and discount cosmetics boutique; international training centres in Paris and New York City (1/200)

MARS CANADA INC.

Food producer, Bolton, Ont. Free on-site fitness centre; offers one-on-one training; vacation purchase program; preferred retirement benefits (1/200)

MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT CO-OP

Recreation gear retailer, Vancouver. Healthy lifestyle encouraged with on-site yoga classes; provide top rates and shower facilities for cyclists; loan program for computers, bikes and bikes (1/200)

ONNI HEALTH CARE LP

Long-term residential care provider, Peterborough, Ont. Compensation leave top-ups to 75 per cent of salary for 17 weeks; seven days off in addition to vacation (1/197)

PROCTER & GAMBLE INC.

Consumer products, Toronto. Academic scholarships up to \$1,000 for children of employees and spouses; workers can increase vacation days by transferring net credits from health benefits plan; three months paid leave every seven years (1/200)

FINANCIAL SERVICES

AGRICULTURE FINANCIAL SERVICES CORP.

Provincial Crown corporation for agriculture, Lacombe, Alta. Referral bonuses of up to \$2,500; flexible work arrangements including shortened weeks; child and tuition (1/200)

ATB FINANCIAL

Financial services, Edmonton. Full tuition subsidies with no maximum; profit-sharing open to everyone; defined contribution pension plan; nine weeks of vacation when taking during non-peak months (1/200)

ASSURPTION MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE CO.

Financial services, Montreal, N.B. May leave top up benefits to 100 per cent of salary for 17 weeks; no maximum tuition subsidies (1/200)

BANK OF MONTREAL

Financial services, Toronto. Institute for Learning offers

more than 350 courses and programs; formal mentoring program; flexible health benefits include full coverage for spouses (1/200)

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BANK OF CANADA

Crown corporation for business, Montreal. Up to five days off can be bought through the health benefits plan; various health coverage (1/200)

CAPITAL ONE SERVICES INC.

Credit card issuer, Toronto. Referral bonuses up to \$30,000; subsidized public transit passes; all tuition fees covered (1/200)

JOHNSON INC.

Insurance and benefits provider, St. John's. Flexible work options include 35-hour work week with full pay; bonuses up to \$2,000 for professional design; 100% (1/200)

HERSHEID CREDIT UNION

Financial services, St. Catharines, Ont. Tuition subsidies up to \$1,000 in outside institutions; paid time off for volunteer work (1/200)

ROYAL BANK OF CANADA

Financial services, Toronto.

Nearly one-third of workers take advantage of flexible work options; defined benefit pension plan plus matching RRSP contributions (1/200)

SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNMENT INSURANCE

Insurance provider, Regina. Defined contribution pension plan with phased-in retirement work options; interest-free loan up to \$5,000 for home computer purchase (1/200)

TORONTO-DOWNEHILL BANK

Financial services, Toronto. Low-interest home loans; share purchase plan; year-end bonuses; training programs for unseasonably educated employees (1/200)

INDUSTRIAL AND RESOURCES

AGRIUM INC.

Fertilizer producer, Calgary. Located next to a provincial park for convenient nature therapy; four weeks vacation after two years on the job; fully paid health coverage for retired employees (1/200)

ALBERTA-PACIFIC FOREST INDUSTRIES INC.

Pulp facility, Boyle, Alta. Flexible time off program: less employees take 12 personal days annually; fourth week of vacation can be taken at time or cash; property has a 35-hectare trout pond, driving range and walking trail (1/200)

BO-CANADA INC.

Medical equipment manufacturer, Mississauga, Ont. Karate and body sculpt classes at subsidised fitness facility; health plan benefits for spouses without age limits; tuition subsidies up to \$2,500 (1/200)

CAMECO CORP.

Uranium producer, Saskatchewan. Matching RRSP contributions; phased-in retirement work options; extensive career development programs (1/200)

DAVIE DIAMOND MINES INC.

Miner, Vancouver, B.C.



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PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW KILGUS

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personal paid days off plus three weeks vacation, most leave top-ups to 90 per cent of salary for 18 weeks, deferred purchase programs. (503)

ELLISDON CORP.

Construction firm, Mississauga, Ont. Rental monitoring programs, profit-sharing and share-purchase plans open to all, defined contribution benefit pension plan. (884)

ENBRIDGE INC.

Natural gas distribution, Cal-



gary. Four separate health benefit plans plus workers given cash equivalent for unused benefits, generous pension plan and matching RSPP contributions, three weeks vacation plus 18 more paid days off per year. (3 880)

GOLDCORP INC.

Mining company, Vancouver. Year-end bonuses for all, open share-purchase plan, four weeks vacation after three years. (2 350)

GREAT LITTLE BOX CO. LTD.

Box manufacturers, Vancouver. Books are open to employees, no maximum vacation, subsidized free on-site fitness centre. (175)

NEW FLYER INDUSTRIES CANADA LTD.

Tricycle bus maker, Whistler. Full salaries for apprentices during their training, wellness week includes flu shots and nutrition classes, birthdays off with pay. (1 200)

PCL CONSTRUCTORS INC.

General contractor, Edmonton. Worker-owned firm with a "promote from within" policy—all senior managers are long-time employees on house trains.

TRICAN WELL SERVICE LTD.

Oil and gas well equipment, Calgary. Federal top-ups to 300 per cent of salary—(2 weeks for new moms and 16 weeks for dad), alternative work options. (1 450)

A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS

AMEC AMERICAS LTD.

Engineering consultants, Oakville, Ont. Two-year engineering in training program for workers preparing to write professional

licensing or license equipment, company daycare and home care service arrangements, extended long weekends. (2 340)

GAMMA-DYNACARE MEDICAL LABORATORIES INC.

Diagnostic laboratory services, Brampton, Ont. Planned retirement options, matching RSPP plan, employees visit at three weeks vacation. (2 420)

GOLDER ASSOCIATES LTD.

Engineering consultants, Burnaby, B.C. Defined contribution pension plan, profit-sharing plan, bonuses for professional accreditation. (2 540)

HALIFAX MORALE LTD.

Newspaper publisher, Halifax. Flexible health plan including retiree benefits, generous tuition subsidies, paid birthdays off. (250)

HILL & KNOWLTON CANADA

Public relations firm, Toronto. Two \$2,500 grants for continuing education, option to buy vacation days, weekly office hour cut. (270)

KPMG LLP

Audit, tax, corporate finance services, Toronto. Grants up to \$10,000 for adoptions, grant our fitness subsidy, seven paid personal days a year. (2 345)

PRICEWATERHOUSE COOPERS LLP

Accounting and professional services, Toronto. Wide variety of firm-sponsored sports teams, donates \$10,000 on behalf of the employee volunteer of the year, annual fitness allowance \$1,200. (6 000)

SASKTEL

Communication firm, Regina. Provincial Crown corporation has a free on-site gym and is launching running trails on White Lake's shore, annual target of 1500 gifts for long-term serving employees. (3 360)

STIKEMAN ELLIOTT LLP

Law firm, Toronto/Montreal.

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So that staff is well rested, Mountain Equipment Co-op has a private nap room. (top), many employers offer work-at-home options.

Flexible work options include 35-hour week at full pay, referral bonuses up to \$1,000, flexible earned days off program. (1,286)

TELUS CORP.
Communications firm, Vancouver
offers interesting day-care services,
share-purchase plan, financial role-
consulting programs. (2,565)

YELLOW PAGES GROUP
Telephone directories, Vernon,
Que. Fully paid health coverage
for retirees with no limits, sub-
sidized tuition top to \$2,000.
(2,407)

★PUBLIC SECTOR AND NON-PROFIT

**OFFICE OF THE
AUDITOR GENERAL
OF CANADA**
Federal government auditor,
Ottawa. Parent leave top up
up to 95 per cent of salary—32
weeks for room and 35 weeks for
dad, flexible health benefits.
(7,051)

B.C. HYDRO
Public utility, Vancouver.
Phased-in retirement option,
defined benefit pension, in-
house apprenticeship programs.
(5,477)

B.C. LOTTERY CORP.
Gaming authority, Kamloops,
B.C. No overtime tuition sub-

sidies, defined benefit pension
plan, year-end bonuses. (7,591)

B.C. PUBLIC SERVICE
Provincial civil service, Victoria.
Flexible work options include
telecommuting up to four weeks,
in-house apprenticeship programs,
Winter Olympic volunteer get
one week fully paid, forgives up
to one-third of B.C. student loans
for master's grade. (16,526)

**B.C. SAFETY
AUTHORITY**
Safety-related firms, now profit,
New Westminster, B.C. Child
care costs covered for workers on
trips or at firm events, new
diets and adoptive parents get

top-up benefits to full cost of
salary for 35 weeks. (241)

**CANADA MORTGAGE
AND HOUSING CORP.**
Housing agency, Ottawa. No-
maximum tuition subsidy, one-
leave top up to 95 per cent of sal-
ary for 32 weeks, defined benefit
pension. (2,034)

CANADA POST CORP.
Postal services, Ottawa. Em-
ployee hockey and curling team-
ways, manager Sam Clark's let-
ter writing division, full retiree
health benefits. (8,184)

obscure work options for workers,
variable scheduling and other
flexible work options, healthy
cafeteria food. (2,745)

**CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S AID
SOCIETY OF TORONTO**
Social support services, Toronto.
Unpaid leave of absence up to a
year, extended maternity leave for
up to three years, extensive in-
house training programs. (1,007)

**CHATHAM-KENT
HEALTH ALLIANCE**
Health care service provider,
Municipality of Chatham Kent,



Ont. Salary for 26 weeks, six
player language instruction in
English, French, Spanish, Rus-
sian and Arabic. (1,075)

GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE
Educational institution, To-
ronto. Free on-the-job training,
must leave top-up to 95 per cent
of salary for 32 weeks, flexible
work options. (1,305)

**HAMILTON HEALTH
SCIENCES CORP.**
Health care service provider,
Hamilton. Transitional retire-
ment work program for older
employees, alternative work op-
tions including telecommuting.
(5,682)

**INFORMATION SERVICES
CORP. OF SASKATCHEWAN**
Lead sales Crown corporation,
Regina. Parental and adoptive
top up to 95 per cent of salary
for 37 weeks, full outside nurse
subsidies. (2,741)

MCGILL UNIVERSITY
University, Montreal. Subsid-
ized on-site daycare, holiday shut-
downs, phased-in retirement leave
program. (3,664)

N.B. POWER
Public electric utility, Frederic-
ton. On-site daycare at headquar-
ters, self-funded leave program
allows for extended paid leave of
up to two months, flexible health
benefits. (2,465)

**ONTARIO POWER
GENERATION INC.**
Public electric utility, Toronto.
On-site daycare and fitness cen-
ter, generous health benefits or
tend to retirement, extensive
support for ongoing education.
(1,815)

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE
Provincial civil service, Toronto.
Lots of opportunities for career
advancement and specialization;
must leave top up to 95 per cent
for 32 weeks. (8,733)

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
University, Kingston, Ont. Stu-
dents of up to \$12,000 per child for
off-site daycare, self-funded leave
program. (3,664)

ROYAL B.C. MUSEUM CORP.
Provincial museum, Victoria.
Unlimited vacation, gradual
and retirement transition plan,
flexible work options. (751)

ROYAL CANADIAN MINT
Coinage maker, Ottawa. Par-
ental leave top-up to 95 per cent
of salary for a year, defined bene-
fit pension plan, on-site fitness
facility. (756)

SASKENERGY INC.
Natural gas distributor, Regina.
Provincial Crown corporation's
must leave top up to 95 per cent
of salary for 32 weeks extensive
training and development op-
portunities. (1,075)

SINON FRASER UNIVERSITY
University, Burnaby, B.C. On-
site daycare, summer day-care

programs for employees' chil-
dren, free fitness facilities, sub-
sidized tuition. (4,387)

STATISTICS CANADA
National agency, Ottawa. On-
site daycare, apprenticeship
subsidies, retiree health cover-
age, maternity leave top up to 95
per cent of salary for 32 weeks.
(5,844)

**SUNNYSIDE HEALTH
SCIENCES CENTRE**
Health care service provider,
Toronto. Training available in
Leadership Institute, on-site day-
care, public transit subsidies and
short-term bus to subway station.
(5,040)

**TORONTO COMMUNITY
HOUSING CORP.**
Social housing provider, Toronto.
Parental leave top-ups to 95 per
cent of salary—32 weeks for mom
and 37 weeks for dad; compen-
sation leaves to 95 per cent of
salary for eight weeks. (1,403)

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More companies on the list than ever are offering parental leave top-ups. Some are even providing 100 per cent of an employee's salary for the first 18 weeks.

TORONTO VIDEO CORP.
Public electric utility, Toronto. Employees can win a week off with pay as part of United Way fundraising, a deferred salary program for paid leaves. (1-832)

VANCOUVER ISLAND HEALTH AUTHORITY
Health services, Victoria. De-facto benefit pension plan, upon need nurses who are pursuing post-graduate training. (1-347)

CITY OF VANCOUVER
Municipality, Vancouver. Delivered paid and additional at career pools, radio and fitness centres run by the city, variety of in-house training options. (5-244)

*TECHNOLOGY

BIOWAVE ULC
Video game developer, Edmonton. Free healthy benefits, free gym with gym services and personal trainers, long-term workers get seven weeks paid sabbatical, paid Christmas shutdown. (4-922)

DELTARE SOFTWARE INC.
Software development services, Charlottetown. Excellent reward with company paid trips and cash bonuses, small city-to-carbon means most commutes are 15 minutes or less. (1-91)

DIGITAL EXTREMES
Internet software developer, London, Ont. Experience a factor when determining vacation for new workers, financial bonus up to \$1,000 for obtaining professional accreditation. (1-94)

ERICSSON CANADA INC.
Communications equipment manufacturer, Mississauga, Ont. Free on-site gym with personal trainer, included discount on the gym fees, share purchase plan open to all. (1-754)

NEWLETT-PACKARD (CANADA) CO.
Computer products, Mississauga, Ont. Matching RSP plus flexible health/benefits plan with no waiting period; tuition subsidies up to \$5,000. (3-871)

MONEYWELL LTD.
Industrial supplies manufacturer, Mississauga, Ont. Employees start at three weeks extra pay plan four days off during holidays, matching RSP contributions and defined contribution pension plans. (4-590)

HDS MORDISON INC.
Health care company, Ottawa

Matching RSP contributions, year-end bonuses, employee referral bonuses, work on a 10-hour compact close to residential areas. (1-880)

HTE ALLSTREAM INC.
Telephone company, Winnipeg. Public transit subsidies and flexible work arrangements, referral bonuses to \$3,000, three weeks vacation to start. (5-424)

NEXT LEVEL GAMES INC.
Video game developer, Vancouver. Subsidized fitness membership and free gym access to near by Capstan Mountain, golf-clubbing, adoption leave top-ups to 80 per cent of salary for 17 weeks. (6-55)

RESEARCH IN MOTION LTD.
Wireless communications devices, Waterloo, Ont. Free BlackBerry and usage fees for all employees, on-site massage treatment, profit-sharing plan and bonuses. (5-576)

SAS INSTITUTE CANADA INC.
Business software, Toronto. "Green" head office with free on-site gym, allowance for home fitness equipment purchase, in-house brand plays company functions, free paid volunteer days off annually. (2-24)

SIPHERS CANADA INC.
Electronics firm, Mississauga, Ont. One-month bonus for completing professional program, agreement, designer, referral bonuses up to \$2,000. (1-238)

SOPHOS INC.
Spam and virus detection software, Vancouver, B.C. Matching RSP plan, referral bonuses up to \$2,500, employee stock purchase plan, 100 per cent of salary for four weeks. (1-771)

UPSIDE SOFTWARE INC.
Business software developer, Edmonton. Performance rewards include cash bonuses and trips, profit sharing open to all workers, matching RSP contributions. (1-492)

*OTHER

ASSOC. OF MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL CROWN EMPLOYEES OF ONTARIO
Union bargaining agent, Toronto. Mat leave top-up payments to 21 per cent of salary for a year, matching RSP contributions, four weeks vacation after one year. (7-77)

BAYER INC.
Health care and science business, Toronto. Marche-style cafeteria offers full-time benefits, lounge bar, Wi-Fi system in games room, discounts on some lower-end company equipment, free gym. (9-621)

MONSANTO CANADA INC.
Agricultural biotech firm, Winnipeg. Personal leave benefits to 90 per cent of salary for 16 weeks, flexible work options, matching RSP contributions, profit sharing, year-end bonuses. (7-77)

NOVARTIS PHARMACEUTICALS CANADA INC.
Pharmaceutical company, Dorval, Que. Wellness program includes spa room, healthy cafeteria menu and free on-site gym, extensive training and retraining. (7-701)

Compiled by Patricia Trebilcock and Michael Barclay



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WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH

Employers are forced to get inventive to lure—and retain—the best and brightest

BY KATE LEMAY After the video game development studios where Geoff Coates was working abruptly shut down, the Vancouver-based director found himself looking for a new job. He heard about another local company, Next Level Games Inc., from a friend.

There's no shortage of undervalued talent on the market in good times, prospective employers could afford to offer fat signing bonuses and generous benefit packages to lure the best of them, but in today's tough economic climate, firms have to become inventive. By offering things like house training, volunteer opportunities and flexible work hours, companies on the Top 100 list are proving it's possible to offer perks that people want, without breaking the bank.

Despite the recession, 25 per cent of high-

school grads aren't paid enough, managers mistakenly estimate that number to be closer to 60 per cent. "Workers are leaving because they feel burnt out, or don't trust their senior leaders," he says. "But they didn't want to say that in an exit interview."

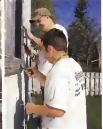
Ultimately, say experts, most employees are looking to feel appreciated and to have opportunities for advancement and growth. So it's no surprise that many in the Top 100 focus heavily on training and development, offering everything from job shadowing to course subsidies. JCI Constructors Inc., for example, has its own in-house College of Construction to help workers hone their technical, personal and leadership skills. Stantec Canada, another top employer, offers a program called "career broadening." After four years, employees can request a departmental assignment without the department and "won't be refused," says Claude Gravelle, Stantec Canada's director of human resource development. Employees benefit by learning a new skill set, and those jobs, too. "When we

get budget cuts, as long as people are willing to move, we can keep them on and give them meaningful work elsewhere," Gravelle says. The program also helps the government get key staff up and running "really quickly," he adds, "with very little retraining."

Also common among top firms are job sharing and reduced workweeks. Such policies cost little to implement, but have been shown to boost worker satisfaction and cut costs. At Siskin's ergline, 10 employees have job sharing arrangements, working one week on, one off. Some companies go a step further by offering tele-

commuting—that's a fancy way of saying employees work from home. "People like the flexibility," says Tina Davis, director of the Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility at the Queen's School of Business. "And they'll feel more responsible and accountable, like the organization trusts them." (At least Top 100 corporate headquarters in Montreal, employees already have a "naturally work environment," Brannan notes, where they make their own hours and are judged on output instead of physical hours at the workplace.)

Family-friendly programs are becoming increasingly popular, too. According to Brannan, this year's Top 100 list features more employers offering parental and maternity top-up



AT NEXT LEVEL, (left), collaboration is key. SiskinEnergy workers rebuild four-busline houses on company time

"The more I talked to these guys, the more I wanted to work here," says Coates. The firm's positive office environment, as well as the collaboration he was offered to him. After spending more than 10 years in the industry, the 40-year-old says, "It became more about the people than the job title." He took a job at Next Level Games—one month ago, and he hasn't looked back.

Attracting and retaining highly skilled workers is crucial, especially during a recession when "you need your best and brightest," says Richard Norrma, managing editor of *Maclean's* Canada Inc., which compiled the list of Canada's Top 100 Employers. With all the company closures and layoffs of late,

potential employees "are now considering leaving their jobs, according to one U.S. study. That could be because they're anxious about their firm's prospects or because they have better options," says Leigh Brannan, founder and CEO of the consulting firm *Shaping the People Inc.*, and author of *The Hidden Power of Employee Leave*. "Those with what Brannan calls 'leave-in-the-middle syndrome' request an opportunity for employees."

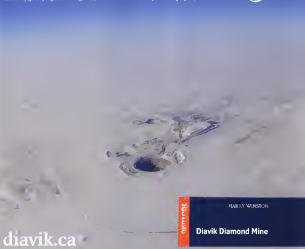
As Coates knows, though, most people aren't ultimately attracted to a job because of company-funded programs to Ontario or free opportunities on the off-site lounge. But privacy is often not even about the money. According to Brannan, only 11 per cent of workers leave a job because they feel they



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Games considered adding a potential lease top-up program for employees a few years ago, "they took a look and asked, 'Can we afford to do that?'" he says. For employer and employee alike, it was worth it. The policy doesn't cost the company a dime to give them just about eight per cent of total use it. (The plan says up to 80 per cent of total use for 17 weeks.) But when you look at the value to the people who need it, it's exceptional," says Verma. "It wasn't about breaking the bank. It was about saying, 'We can have you develop a career here.'"

While many businesses have slashed recruitment budgets—for instance, just 17 companies attended the career fair at York University's Schulich School of Business this year, down from 40 in 2008—companies in the

best talent "to position ourselves for the recovery." Several companies offer bonuses to employees who refer successful candidates (Bentley Canada Ltd. pays up to \$2,000 each), a strategy that makes those who referred the hire feel that their opinion matter.

MANY BUSINESSES SLASHED RECRUITMENT BUDGETS, BUT TOP 100 COMPANIES ARE RELUCTANT TO DO SO



PCL HAS its own College of Construction, which helps workers learn their skills.

Top 100 have been reluctant to do so. "We can't ever stop investing in talent," says Marital Lachance, UOndel Canada Inc.'s senior vice-president of human resources. "That would be a big, big mistake." While the company implemented a hiring freeze for some positions during the recent recession, overall recruitment continued unabated. In fact, UOndel Canada's investment in training and recruitment has increased this year.

Messiah, manager at Sidman based PCL, is always on the lookout, says Karen White, the company's director of human resources and professional development. "If we had someone who'll be a tremendous asset, we always have a spot for them," she says. "We have hired even when there's not a vacancy to fill. We're thinking about the future." Lyane Gagne, associate vice-president, human resources at McGill University (another Top 100 employer), says it's all about keeping

flexibility for succession is also crucial. "If companies take over a couple years off hiring, when they need to fill more senior roles the talent won't be there," says Joseph Palumbo, executive director of the career development centre at the Schulich School of Business. Sixteen Canada, for instance, hired about 100 post-secondary graduates last year, and will add another 100 in 2009. With a wave of retirements approaching as the population ages, Gagne says, "We're making sure the pipeline stays full all the way through."

To replace the situation of young workers, employees are turning to one of Generation Y's favourite issues: the environment. Sid Energy, for example, often hires employees the chance to do volunteer work with a fulfilling cause helping to make it more energy efficient. The project was a major summer job for 16-year-old Sean. Anderson enjoyed a job there in January. "I jumped out and saw a chance to

help the community," says the marketing assistant, who just finished filling up homes in Regina (all on company time) with about 100 other volunteers. "We got a really nice, handwritten letter from someone who had their house filled up," he says. "It made me feel good to be a part of it."

Indeed, offering free good initiatives is another popular trend. Triwest Power-Cooper Canada LLP is just one of the top employers that encourages volunteering; the company donates \$100 to a worker's favourite charity if they volunteer more than 20 hours a year. Such programs are a worthwhile investment, Dacin says, noting that companies that provide opportunities for employees to do charity in the community "are seeing huge results." After all, "people want meaning from their work," she adds. "If an employer can give them three hours a week to go volunteer, it's a great investment for them."

And a lot of fun goes a long way. At Sid Energy, employees age 16 and under are encouraged to join Generation Energy, an initiative that offers mentorship and networking opportunities, as well as the chance to do volunteer work. Some of the activities take place on company time, but the group also organizes after hours, too. At SAS Institute Canada Inc., a provider of business analytics software and services, employees started an in-house band (called SASquare) that performs at various functions. "Everybody's mingling and having a good time on the dance floor," says Stephen Jordan, 46, the company's director of education and lived together in the band. "It's great for team building." At Nest Level Games, staff can bring their pets to work.

Once members of the Top 100 are in full force, they need to stick around. At SAS Canada, the staff retention rate is more than 94 per cent this year. And Scotiabank Canada loans more people to retirement than anything else "by a factor of two," says Gonzalez. That kind of loyalty is important for a couple of reasons. If you have a constant churn of employees, "the customer doesn't have a stable relationship with your company," says Friedman. "That's a threat to your business." And staff who quit are expensive: replacing someone who makes \$60,000, for instance, will cost the company about that much just to find a replacement and get the new hire up to speed, not to mention the potential cost of losing that employee's clients and contacts. In some cases, "keeping your employees is actually helping positive money," says Verma. Still, adds Dacin, it's all about retaining the right people.

People like Geoff Coates. At Nest Level, he holds a valued part of the team. "Here," he says, "we all have a voice." ■

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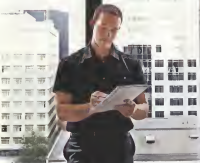
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DURING THE RECESSION, Gamache had "no worries" about losing his public-sector job

THE WAR FOR WORKERS

The public sector is all the rage these days. How can the private sector compete?

BY RACHEL MCKENZIE • Jacob Gamache never thought he'd end up in the public sector. "There is a stereotype that the government of Canada is very slow," he says. Seeking a faster-paced, more competitive environment, Gamache used his master's degree in sports

administration to land a job in 2005 with a private, non-profit organization in Ottawa. Though officially the manager of communications and events, Gamache, now 34, says he was somewhat of a "jack of all trades," creating pamphlets, updating the website, and offering tech support to his co-workers. "I got an opportunity to learn a lot," he says of the job, which required plenty of overtime. "You come in the morning at 7:30 or eight and you're not too sure where you'll go home at night. Where you do, the laptop comes with

you. And the cellphone."

By the fall of 2007, Gamache was ready for "something a bit more stable." On a friend's suggestion, he applied to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), a federal funding agency—and one of Canada's Top 100 Employers this year. He took a job with the agency in May 2008 and hasn't looked back. On top of solid benefits, an enviable pension and a higher salary, he says there's plenty of opportunity to advance. (Despite his misgivings about the letters of transference, he's already been promoted to project officer in a little more than a year.) What's more, while the recent economic downturn has seen hundreds of thousands of Canadians lose their jobs, he's had "no worries" about building on his. When asked whether he would consider returning to the private sector, Gamache says, "It would be a very tough sell."

Gamache is not the only one discovering that a career in the public service isn't so bad after all. In 2006, when Richard Verma, managing editor of *Newsday*, first compiled Canada's Top 100 Employers, "the focus was still on big-name shore appoints," he says. "The private sector had the flashy and splashy stuff; it've caught everybody's attention." Today, following what could be the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, "the shore is off," he says. The hallmarks of public-sector employment—job security, benefits and a pension ride from the market fluctuations that dominated and dragged the world down—are all the rage. Add in wage premiums, which many public-sector workers are now used to enjoy over their private-sector counterparts, and it looks like government has become a formidable competitor in the war for talent. Could Gamache's conversion from company man to civil servant be a harbinger of things to come? Many private-sector companies aren't waiting to find out. Instead, they're trying to capitalize on their unique strengths to ensure that their best and brightest have every incentive to stay put.

That bonus benefits are generally found in the public sector is nothing new. Compared to private-sector offerings, says Doug Hyatt, a labour economist at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management, "the gap has always been there and it's always been substantial." Thanks to hard-fought collective bargaining agreements, most government workers enjoy a package that looks something like what's in place at CIHR: maternity pay up to benefits equivalent to 90 per cent of salary for 52 weeks (34 weeks for new dads), a flexible health plan that includes paid coverage for retired employees, and a defined benefit pension plan, which often pays out to the tune of 60 or 70 per cent of final salary. By contrast, private companies have historically offered less when it comes to

great people real opportunities



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health benefits, often sleeping or sleeping on desks and extended coverage, and are slower to adopt maternity (and paternity) top ups. Which businesses provide pensions, they are consistently of the defined contributory human variety, where payouts depend on how much is invested and how well those investments perform. When private companies do offer defined benefit plans, says Toronto-based pension lawyer James Parlot, they "hardly pay out benefits [at] generous" as those offered by government.

Doc Drummond, senior vice president and chief economist at TD Bank Financial Group, says that between 1999 and 2005, jobs without benefits grew five times in size as those with benefits. Nowhere is the divide more obvious, he says, than when it comes to pensions. Many companies have grown reluctant to assume the risk of traditional pensions, which they are required to backstop if random disasters or market rates drop. (These plans have survived thanks to the finances of the Big Three automakers, which have had to beg for government bailouts in order to fulfill their obligations to employees.) While 10 per cent of public sector employees enjoy the traditional defined benefit plan, the proportion of workers in the private sector with any employee-sponsored plan has sunk to 23 per cent. "We're almost moving in the wrong direction," where civil servants and politicians will be the only people with defined benefit plans.¹⁰

That might not be a big deal if private sector workers were allowed to soak more away. But as Parlot detailed in a report for the C.D. Howe Institute last year, under the current law, workers with defined contributory human plan and 25% can see a maximum of 18 per cent of their annual income. Meanwhile, when government workers and their employers put aside cost-consciousness and add up to 30 per cent of yearly pay "that's ending up in the hands of workers," says Drummond, "public sector and private sector."

CIVIL SERVANTS AND POLITICIANS MAY SOON BE THE ONLY WORKERS WITH DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS



DONOHUE (top) offers flexible health benefits; Toronto city workers won a 5.6 per cent raise

Though top CEOs will bring home the richest paychecks, for everyone else, say some experts, government may be where it's at. After Drummond left the Department of Finance in 2006 to join TD, he says he "got calls from a number of former colleagues asking me to help them get a big fat job in Toronto. But even back then, he says, "there were very few jobs that actually paid what they were making in Ottawa, never mind giving them a big fat raise."

According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the salary divide has since expanded. In a report published last year, CFIB found that in 2006, federal government employees earned an average of 173 per cent more than their private sector counterparts, up from 151 per cent in 2000. Those numbers, however, have been hotly contested—among partly on CFIB's stated sources and methodology (primarily how to treat part-time workers are included) as evidence of a skew. Ottawa has yet to weigh in. The spokesman for the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat told Maclean's that the department did not have enough time to comment on CFIB's data prior to publication. But he cites as proof of fiscal responsibility recent legislation limiting annual wage increases for federal government employees to 1.5 per cent until 2013-2012. When determining salaries, he says, "policy is far more competitive to be competitive with, but not lead, that provided for similar work in relevant labour markets."

Of course, part of the reason the public sector has been looking especially sweet these days is that, unlike the private sector, government finances are not directly linked to the economy. The most significant constraint on the public sector, says Parlot, is political. While the effect of public anger over an unbalanced

budget can also "be very strong," he says, "it may come with a bit of a lag." And during the recent economic meltdown, civil servants have surprisingly well—there is, at least in part, the strength of their collective bargaining power. In the wake of the crash, says Benjamin Tel, senior economist at CIBC World Markets, "we're seeing the diminishing power of private sector unions, and we haven't seen any of this diminishing power in the public sector." "Whereas now workers were forced to



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and layoffs and make significant pension contributions so their companies could stay in business, Toronto city workers walked the picket line for more than a month, demanding a 12 per cent raise over three years and a continuation of a controversial six-day week that allowed some members to cash in for up to six months pay upon retirement. They returned with their heads held high: members won a 5.6 per cent raise and the ability to cash in unused sick days or save them for later—despite the \$495 million price tag.

But to what extent is public sector pay catching up with private? David Levy, senior advisor to consider a career in government, somewhat ironically, due to an interesting anecdote shared by one of his clients' human resources. The client is a large utility. "I had a female employee who was the 21 year old daughter of a person who died at 16 years old. She thought about his pension at 15 years old. It didn't take long for Levy to do the math. 'Even though I've not known the intricacies of the pension plan at the civil service, I knew the reputation,' says Levy, which was an icon at Queen's Park. 'These added benefits are priceless.'"

According to Howard Lewis, a Toronto-based labour lawyer, the drive is significant. His clients, he says, are "looking people to the public sector and they weren't before." The legislation is being felt "especially at junior levels," in positions like human resources, accounting and administration, he says. And while the competition has slowed a bit during the recession due to high unemployment, it was running along "as a fever pitch" right before the downturn, says CIBC president and CEO Catherine Scott. She has "no doubt it was this going to be very intense again in a very short period of time," she adds.

In the meantime, there is plenty that businesses can do—and losses they can learn from Canada's top 100. According to MetLife, many Toronto, a major advantage of private companies is their "flexibility and flexibility" which, he says, allows them to try out new programs "without running into bureaucratic stumbling blocks." And while the per cent pay is not that, only government can offer general benefits, "university education can start to look at the members' needs," says Toronto. "They might be surprised that they can afford these things."

Many businesses have already made strides to catch up with the generous retirement offerings in the public sector. Top 100 owner pay. Thean Wild Service Ltd. in Calgary provides retirement with a 100 per cent top up on their salaries for 55 years (new grads get 56 weeks of salary). Another winner, Toyota



LEVY, who works at Queen's Park, describes the public-sector benefits as "priceless"

PRIVATE BUSINESSES ARE OFFERING EXTRA VACATION TIME AND SUBSIDIES FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION IN ORDER TO WOO EMPLOYEES

Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc., a motor vehicle health benefits that offered into retirement, "no age limit." When it comes to retirement, it is almost become a way of course for companies to start workers off at three weeks—and top employees work out to a quarterly rate. After just two years at Agrium Inc., a wholesale fertilizer manufacturer in Calgary, employees get two weeks off.

Improving benefits, however, is only the beginning. According to Annette Verna, director of Recruitment for Industrial Relations and HR, the biggest hurdle the private sector must overcome is distrust. In the past, workers who joined a company in their 20s could expect to remain there until retire-

ment, offering hard work and loyalty in return. But after rounds of layoffs and a stretched shift from full-time jobs to contract work, "that connection is broken," he says. "Young people don't believe that companies are interested in their long-term career." They think of their jobs as "more like a date than a marriage." He says Verna's advice is for parents to make sure to retain talent, they don't "show through their actions and through their words that they are offering careers and not just a job."

That explains why Bob Meggs, president and CEO of Vancouver's Great Little Box Company Ltd., is so proud of the fact that his first employees, hired 37 years ago, "is still here." Turnover rates at the Top 100 company, which employs 373 people, are well below average. For Meggs, forging long-term relationships with his staff starts with the hiring process—which typically requires candidates to make a thorough interview. "We're trying to find out who a person is really like," he says. "The biggest thing we're after is 'I don't get on board, Meggs encourages his staff to feel part of the team, offering a bonus of up to \$1,500 to those who refer new hires. He's kept the company's books open, and even taught workers to read the financials. "We want people to understand how we do," he says. And it should be anticipated that this year will be the company's first in the red.

"We'll still give everybody money."

A staff fee to show workers you care about career development is through education. Despite the downturn, many top businesses are continuing to offer subsidies that approach what's available to many public-sector employees. Great Little Box covers tuition for college and university courses. At Golden Associates Ltd., an engineering consulting firm in Burnaby, B.C., one per cent of net revenue is earmarked for training, and money is contributed to a scholarship fund. Employees at the Toronto-based public relations firm Hill & Knowlton Canada receive cash awards of up to \$1,000 upon the completion of certain courses and accreditation. According to Gordon Johnson, vice president of human resources at Bayer Inc., a pharmaceutical manufacturing company located in the Toronto area, leadership training retained since when the recession hit last year. Instead, "we cut back on traditional things like travel," he says. It's about "people get by by coming to Bayer they develop their skills. Bayer's going to invest in them."

Instead of attempting to match the eight-hour working day that many public-sector jobs, private businesses are giving employees the freedom to set their own schedules. A typical example of the "alternative work options" offered by many of the Top 100 firms are those at Johnson Inc., an insurance and benefits provider in St. John's, Nfld., where employees can also work from home or take a 30-hour week at full pay. Karen Wessley, a people services leader at the accounting firm Ernst & Young LLP, says these programs let employees know that their work-life balance is respected. "During putting the initiative in place, she says, it is not enough. When the Top 100 firms have instituted this kind of work-life balance, she says the same was said that "if somebody was leaving and going to their child's soccer practice, they probably said, 'I'm going to a meeting,' because that wasn't perceived as dedicated enough." So, she says, the company "encouraged our most senior people to all everybody when they were leaving the office for a reason outside of work." Though it took some time before employees felt like they weren't being judged, today, she says, "we're really there."

Now there that even, says Verna, business models that are tapping into the unique strengths to foster loyalty among workers in ways "that no public-sector employer can." Even in tough times, "there's some thing about ownership that appeals," he says. Share purchase plans, like the one at place at Telus Corporation, a Top 100 Employer with a staff of nearly 26,000, are "about connecting with your people and making them part of the project that is your business," he says.

Meanwhile, PCL Constructors Inc., a 100 per cent employee-owned \$1 billion contractor, is 100 per cent employee-owned. Small companies can foster ownership, too. David Korman, an executive who works for a company in London, Ont., that employs just 56, offers workers a profit-sharing plan.

While the public sector is in good shape right now, don't count the private sector out just yet in the war for workers. "While changing demographics will reach all employees, CIBC's Tal says that nowhere will the coming wave of retirement be as deeply felt as in the public sector, which is being hit as hard as it is described as 'a huge huge crisis.' While government may still have a head start with cash, Tal says that in order to attract senior managers, "they will have to make the environment much more winning, beyond the money."

To be sure, the government agencies and Crown corporations on the Top 100 list didn't get there on compensation alone. According to James McDonald, deputy chairman and head of the B.C. Public Service, for the majority of applicants, who number have doubled in recent years, "salary and benefits are not

the main attraction." Instead, the credits "robust career-pathing plan," an emerging employees in tough times. After budget cuts this year, the province's public service applied vacancies from recent retirements across retirement to reduce 900 jobs without 200 layoffs. "Our focus was very much on retaining a trust in our employees," says McDonald. Garschke describes CHRC as having "all the benefits of working for the government" while being "not like a corporation." On top of the standard salary bump for inflation, hard work can be rewarded with a boost in pay—which, he says, "is the extra motivation."

Ultimately, whether an employee chooses public or private often comes down to personal preference. "People I've talked to have had very positive reasons for why they wanted to work here as opposed to the public sector," says Diamond. "I'm not going back because I'm offering more money." By the same token, a common thread that binds many in the Ontario Public Service, says deputy chairman Ron McKelvie, is "a public service ethos." But as Garschke's experience suggests, when faced with a good enough offer, a change of heart can come easier than one might expect. ■

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FEAR FACTOR

Can having a staff scared for their jobs be good for business?

BY CATRY GIBLIN • Despite signs that the global economy is recovering from the recession, many people are still afraid of losing their jobs. A recent study in the U.K. indicates that workers can be terrified about being fired, they're choosing sick days (over three per cent of days say they haven't even called in sick this year for fear of seeming like a slacker—that's a 30 per cent increase over 2008). For some, no address is too severe, including a migrant, but back or spine (in Canada are feeling similarly insecure two more polls, one by Harris/Dorcas and another by Desjardins Financial Security, revealed that more than one third of Canadians still worry about being fired because of the economic downturn. And if they're looking for hope, they won't find it in Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's assertion earlier this month that "we will have a promising unemployment problem well into 2010." It's no wonder that across the country anxious workers have been sleeping in their cars or sleeping in their homes in an effort to appear dedicated, capable and indispensable to their bosses.

Having a staff willing to work more—and possibly harder—seems ideal for employers. "Moderate amounts of fear, enough to get your attention, are very motivating," says Judith Harbeck, a former psychology professor who has consulted with businesses including IBM and Johnson & Johnson on how to optimize employee performance. Workers who sense the end is near can be motivated to make a final push for survival. There are incidents of some auto plants achieving their highest productivity in the year they were shut down, says Ann Frost, professor of organizational behavior at the University of Western Ontario's Richard Ivey School of Business.

Job insecurity can also foster competition among employees, which could boost the quality of work being done and the level of responsibility employees are willing to accept. "People don't want to be the lowest on the team pole," says Frost, so they'll work as hard as they can for as long as possible. It's a logical response, adds Douglas Reid, a strategic management professor at Queen's University School of Business. "The more in-



WORRYING about layoffs, says one expert, can be paralyzing.

some concludes that their livelihood is being taken away from them, they're going to start engaging in self-protection activities."

So could a little job insecurity actually be good for business? Not exactly, say experts, who all agree that these extreme levels of output can't be sustained, especially when they're motivated by fear rather than genuine commitment. "The stress cuts at people," says Frost. And that's not the only issue. A study in the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* in 2004, published on the heels of the last economic boom, examined factory workers at a food processing plant who were worried about layoffs. The result: they became complacent about safety, which put them at a higher risk for workplace injuries and accidents. Scheduling sick days, says Reid, is also hazardous to an employer's health.

That's why, no matter how motivating the fear of being fired may be at the short term,

it's fundamentally damaging to businesses and individuals, experts say. "Fear as a tactic to improve performance is a very short-sighted strategy," says Harbeck, who wrote *Don't Fear the Fear*, about the relationship between bosses and employees. In short, she explains, "the majority will feel betrayed, so there is a great deal of anger as well as fear and anxiety." Reid calls fear at work "corrosive" and believes it "turns people against people." What's more, employees who feel they have no future at a company can become paralyzed with grief, says Frost, and "productivity just goes through the floor."

The best employers have a way of diffusing employees' fear before it grips the way of productivity. Harbeck claims it comes down to keeping workers feeling engaged and valued. South West Airlines, says Reid and Frost, is a good example of this. The airline, unlike every other company, is known for readily laying off staff. In a sense, the company operates the same no matter what's going on in the global economy: rather than focus on quarter-to-quarter revenues, Reid says it manages for the long term, and so successfully chooses employees as the key to slow growth. That Southwest has thrived recently and selectively may offer comfort to workers.

But there's not a lot of time to train. Managers also "deluge a lot of authority" to staff, says Reid, which provides each person with a sense of empowerment, which is a great motivator. In contrast, he cites Nortel Networks, the former telecommunications giant, as an example of a company mismanaging the work around. "The drip-feeding of information about the future," which was bleak, says Reid, only increased the level of anxiety in the workplace. Nortel's "inability to communicate the fire of bad news," he adds, meant employee morale was personally being hampered.

There's nothing cool about these days. Often, worried workers cope by losing themselves and others the line, "I'm just grateful to have a job." Frost says that while it may be true, "I'm not sure it makes them any more committed to their employer." So when things do turn around, they may leave on their own. That's what the boss should be afraid of. ■



"What? The big TV networks made nearly \$400 million in operating profits last year and now they want us to bail them out!"

It's hard to believe Canada's big TV networks like CTV and Global are now asking the CRTC to impose a TV tax of up to \$80/month on every cable and satellite subscriber in the country. Aren't these the same networks that made hundreds of millions of dollars in operating profit last year alone?

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REDHEAD, HOLLAND: Fifth annual Redhead Day. Redheads are more sensitive to certain types of pain than other hair colors or textures.

IT'S LIKE A CURSE

New findings offer a bleak outlook for redheads everywhere

BY KATIE ENGLISHART • And in the hair colour of the ensemble. In fashion magazines worldwide, crimson shades abound: Holly wood has succumbed to "scarlet fever" and starlets are "painting the town red." Model Coco Rocha and actress Scarlett Johansson are two of the latest to turn red. But they are only following in the wake of faux-red mad blazers like Amy Adams, who swears there was "a defining shift in [her] life" the moment she "decided to go red."

Hollywood myth Robert Halliwell—whose latest gig involves glowing CSI site Murg Halpinborg's copper hair shining on wire-visions that, at all the bottle, brought shades, red, is the most fabled. "It's so bad to get red right," he bemoans. "It can be as Low-Lacy orange. Or it can go to the blue, dark red, red that is sort of 'Yes.' That, of course, is not a problem for the two per cent of the world that is naturally red; that while Hollywood is turning once upon a time, another place appears increasingly the wrong way to redheads the doctor's chair.

According to a recent study, redheads are twice as likely to avoid the dentist as people with other hair colors. The discovery, says Daniel Sessler, chair of anesthesiology research at the Cleveland Clinic, began with "a persistent rumor" that redheads were difficult to anesthetize. "Curious, Sessler decided to test that

claim. His findings revealed what dentists had thought to be more folklore: that redheads require "a noticeably greater" extra dose of general anesthesia to get the same pain relief as blond or brown (30 per cent more). The same proved true for local anesthetics. But the final step was applying those discoveries to the world of dentistry. It was no surprise, says Sessler, to find that redheads are "considerably more sensitive" to the dentist, "where local anesthetics are commonplace—sometimes that many options of going a little further." Redheads are more sensitive than other people to certain kinds of pain, "Sessler affirms.

Jeffrey McGill, professor of pain research at McGill University, dispenses Sessler's claim. He argues that redheads are in fact more sensitive to anesthesia and less sensitive to pain. The diverging conclusions may reflect the different ways in which pain was measured. The hapless redheads in Sessler's research were exposed to thermal pins. McGill used electric shock. But the discrepancy does not negate the consequential finding: that red hair has something to do with pain sensitivity in the first place.

Red hair usually results from a mutation of the MC1R gene, on chromosome 26. The mutation can go unexpressed for generations, but when two mutant genes coincide—one from each parent—red hair is triggered. The idea that this mutant gene may be a problem in the domain of pain is one of several new findings that offer a bleak outlook for redheads everywhere. This summer, an Australian study linked red hair to Turner's syndrome, a

childhood-onset neuropsychiatric disorder that results in motor and social loss. Hair color may also influence mental status. Sessler found divorce to be more common in redheads—an observation that he warns could be "spurious." But no data handles the grim fate of the redheaded more dearly than the one made by the Oxford Hair Foundation: that, in 100 years, they will be all but extinct.

It's a prediction that might be welcomed in some parts of the world: notably the U.K., where a violent discrimination against red heads—known as "gingerism"—persists. This uniquely British head-offery has existed for generations, as the old English proverb goes: "Do not let the shadow of a redheaded person fall upon you." It might give you bad luck. But it runs to the fore in 2009, when a 20-year-old was evicted in the back because of red hair—was in the BBC described as the "most serious anti-red hair hate crime." It was news again in 2007, after a family of ten gingers in Newcastle claimed they had to move because five names because of their color-related abuse. In the midst of it all, the BBC asked, "gingerism is not as racist?" (The article opened with a pole: "What's the difference between a terrorist and a redhead?" "You can negotiate with a terrorist.")

Indeed, the intolerance holds a strangely viable place in British society. A few years ago, Conservative MP Patrick Mercer sought to defend racial name-calling on the subway line's policy "A chap with red hair, for example, would also get a hard time. A far harder time than a black man, in fact." (Mercer was later dropped by his party.)

Some say the preposterous position of the U.K. redhead is linked to the old, aversive hostility between the English and Scots and Irish. They claim that red hair to some extent is a Celtic background (up to 35 per cent of Scots are redheads and up to 20 per cent of the Irish have red hair). But even in Canada, a Vancouver team made headlines last year after starting "Nick's Ginger Day" campaign on Facebook—inspired by a South Park episode in which there is an uprising against redheads. On the anniversary day, a number of children were beaten up by adults, and doctors were sent home from school.

A few years ago, author Marion Roach went on a two-year journey to discover the origin of these pervasive opinions—a journey which culminated in a book: *The Facts of Denise: The Myth, Meaning, and Sexual Power of Red Hair*. "I've had

hospitals tell me that the Vikings started it," she says. "Because the Vikings, many verbs had, rapid and pillaged their way across the U.K." But she admits that racism is hard to trace. "But what I did find is that in every culture, at some point in history, there's been a fear and a hatred of redheads," jokes, the Biblical figure who betrayed Jews, turned being painted with red hair in the myth. Arthur and Shakespeare had his William don't wig. But the most "terrifying" display, says Roach, is captured in a mural of Adam and Eve at London's St Paul's Cathedral: "Eve, when she's happy and frolicking, her hair is gold. And when she's getting down out of the garden, when all you see is God's large arm directing her out, she's cowering under the weight of her long, red hair."

Sometimes used to think that red hair emerged when Moses appeared in Europe 40,000 years ago. But then in 2007, DNA research from Neanderthals suggested that at least some were redheads. That means the progeny might be over 100,000 years old. What that shows is that red hair may once have conferred a biological advantage.

Notably, redheads can produce high concentrations of vitamin D under low light conditions, something that helped ward off rickets in light-deprived northern Europe. Jonathan Keen, who discovered the red hair gene, argued that for it to have thrived, red hair must have been a desired trait.

What's clear is that an aversion to red hair—the science, history and aesthetics—remains. This winter, Charlotte Robinson and Ginger Shugs, a photo collection of individuals for the U.K. team, red-haired photographer, the publication will be a sort of vindication. Roach says that growing up, she was subjected to a relentless stream of teasing—"ginger-baiting"—which "bordered on molestation." Moving to California, she was asked to learn "Amenities love red hair!"

Redheads, in turn, are riding the wave. The script on the cake was that actress's fifth annual Redhead Day in Leeds, Holland. Threelensmen, with 12,000 gingers, was organized by Rose Roseworth, an energy consultant and actress assistant—and a blond. "So many people came to the event," he explained, because "people with red hair feel related to other people with red hair." Popular even on the day, redheads are still with red hair—red heads, actresses on red hair scenes and a group photo shot.

And about that proxy problem of unimpaired extinction? A host of pro-red websites have sprung up. "So [link] the Redheads," outlines Redheads.com, a "new step-people, and impermissible to the very start. The first step is to accompany. The second is to wear a story." But what spurred this new form? Roach among the Hollywood elite, perhaps. Marion Roach has a different idea: "We're just much more comfortable with powerful women than we ever have been." The questionless is self-referential, Roach says, is "the ultimate representation of the powerful woman." Now, with any hope, redheads will be around long enough to enjoy this new-found womanhood. ■

REDHEADS WILL BE ALL BUT EXTINCT IN 100 YEARS, SOME SAY



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China's downed the first of discrimination from average-sized folks. So they formed their own mountain community where everyone must be under four foot three. Now the group has commercialized its pro-social consistency by transforming the town into a tourist attraction exclusively aimed at tiny tale characters and reside in mountain houses. "He's there wasn't any big people and everything we do is for us," said spokesman Fu Tian.



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WHY COLLEGE GRADS GET JOBS

COLLEGES ARE A VITAL CONTRIBUTOR TO THE CANADIAN ECONOMY. THEY PROVIDE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT TO BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS, ANTICIPATE MARKET SHIFTS AND EDUCATE PEOPLE TO FILL POSITIONS IN EMERGING SECTORS. COLLEGES ALSO PLACE A WIDE RANGE OF QUALIFIED STUDENTS IN REAL-WORLD BUSINESSES FOR WORK PLACEMENT TERMS, INFUSING THOSE WORKPLACES WITH TALENTED, SKILLED AND MOTIVATED PEOPLE WHO OFTEN BECOME FULL-TIME STAFF AFTER GRADUATION.



Applied Research Helps SNAG JOBS

Canada's colleges engage students in actual workplaces, real-life problems and applied research. The applied learning approach benefits the student as a learner, contributes to an impressive resume, and at the same time helps individual businesses and the wider economy. Just as importantly, the advanced skills acquired by college students lead to employment, often immediately upon graduation.

"Colleges are not interested in research on the fringes of knowledge but rather in solving real problems that can help drive business to the next level," says Jim Knight, President of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges.

The Biotechnology Applied Degree program at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario is one example. The program was developed with input from local biotech businesses, research institutes and scientists after it was determined that the local biotech sector would need more people with advanced skills, said Dr. Cheryl Ketola, a professor and coordinator of the program. Though universities offer biotechnology as an area of study, Fanshawe is the first Canadian college to offer an applied degree in the area.

The four-year program helps students learn how to take an idea from the lab stage to the marketplace. "In fourth year they create a business plan for a biotech-based product," says Ketola. "This puts the science together with the business needs of the industry, a

combination that is often missed in biotech education. People who have hired our students are amazed by how well they perform, their ability to solve problems and their capacity to put together a scientific program."

Some colleges are providing students with opportunities to work as research assistants. At St. Lawrence College in Kingston, Ontario, Don Young, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Science, recently had students working on improving the performance of a solar wall. "They helped set up the project and analyze the data," notes Young. "Participants had their names on the research paper, which was great for their resumes."

Durham College in Oshawa's Renewable Energy Technician program introduces students to the field of renewable, sustainable and alternative energy solutions and helps them develop a foundation for installing, repairing and maintaining renewable energy systems, including solar and wind power and ground source heat pumps. The one-year Energy Audit Techniques certificate and two-year Renewable Energy Technician diploma programs teach students alternative energy generation and distribution, reflecting the growing need to develop a workforce that is able to manage and maintain alternative energy sources without negatively affecting the environment.

Last year, a team of students in the Bachelor of Technology program at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) rose to a research challenge that ended up saving a local company well over \$100,000.

Vivian Bugar was one of the team members. "We were asked to find a solution to a problem of insulated polyurethane linings sticking to the moulds that produced them. We tried over 100 possible solutions in two semesters before solving the problem. I really enjoyed the challenge as it gave me a lot of industry knowledge as well as recognition for our success."

For their efforts the manufacturer offered each grad a job.

Dr. James Watzke, Dean of Research at Toronto-based Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, says innovative thinking is in the DNA of colleges. At Humber we stress essentials like project management, the importance of documentation, research and development, and team dynamics. Applied research is highly integrated with academic programming and the vehicles are the work placement experiences.

Humber students have applied their skill and ingenuity to thousands of workplace challenges. Students in the mechanical design and applied technology programs have improved F-type connectors for cable businesses. Electrical engineering students have created next-generation four silo inventory control systems. Students from the wireless graduate certification program worked with the Toronto Conservation Authority to develop a wireless network in a heavily forested conservation area.

"Applied learning is a powerful model that translates into benefits for students," states Watzke. "When a Humber grad shows up for a job interview I want him or her to be able to, point to a really cool project and say with confidence, 'I understand project management, applied research and development. I know that costs matter.' If that applicant has even a small advantage over another one, I am happy."



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SUPPLEMENT

WHY COLLEGE GRADS GET JOBS

College EXPANDS OPPORTUNITIES for University Grad



As the focus of Ryan Goodale's postgraduate research work in the field of geographic information systems (GIS), endangered shorebirds may have benefited almost as much from his college education as Goodale himself did.

Goodale's project involved assessing the shore habitat of the Piping Plover using a LiDAR system, which employs laser technology to measure ground elevations from an aircraft. The research was undertaken through the Applied Geomatics Research Group, housed within the Centre for Geographic Sciences at Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC). Goodale's work, which was published in the Canadian Journal of Remote Sensing, may lead to the conservation of habitat essential to the survival of this species, which nests and feeds on Nova Scotia's shores.

Like about 20 percent of college students, Goodale had obtained a university education before entering the college system. He had attended Lakehead University in Thunder Bay to study forestry at both the undergraduate and Master's levels. There, he took a GIS course, not realizing at the time how important this subject would figure in his future.

Upon graduation, Goodale relocated to Nova Scotia, where he was dismayed to find the forestry sector in a major slump.

"The employment situation was depressing after I had invested so much in my education. There were just no jobs in my field, and those I applied for required GIS skills."

The answer lay in a GIS advanced diploma through NSCC. Goodale received credit for some of his university courses and was able to complete the program in one year.

The hands-on nature of the GIS program really appealed to Goodale. "It was pretty intense and yet I really enjoyed it. The majority of our work involved using the software and analyzing data. The program made me a specialist in GIS. This allows me to be part of a continuously growing and expanding discipline," he says. "As GIS and remote sensing technology grows I find myself continuously learning and discovering new ways to use the technologies to solve problems. It's fascinating work and I consider myself very fortunate."

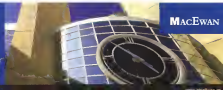
"Like about 20 percent of college students, Goodale had obtained a university education before entering the college system."

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The Farmer's Daughter TRAVELS The World

Loree Dargis wanted an education with real-life applicability.

The St. Vincent, Alberta-based Dargis is the oldest daughter in a farming family of five girls. "We have a mixed farm operation in St. Vincent, Alberta," says Dargis. "My parents taught us to work hard and take pride in our ability to take care of our family and provide food for the world."

When it came time to choose a post-secondary path, Dargis' father suggested that she attend his alma mater, Olds College in Olds, Alberta. "He wanted

me to meet a rich farm boy and live happily ever after," laughs Dargis. "But I did have a genuine interest in the business of farming and I wanted the intimacy of a smaller school where each student is highly valued and not just a number."

After graduating with an Agriculture Business diploma from Olds in 2005, Dargis returned to the family farm where she worked for the summer and thought about what to do next. She wanted more education and was considering entering university to take a degree in agriculture. But she decided that the Bachelor of Applied Science program in Agribusiness from Olds would be her best choice, partly because the courses were more applicable to the actual business of farming. "I started my class work that fall and the following year I entered a 10-month directed field study as an

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Everything I learned at college makes me a more valuable employee and a better farmer.

agricultural specialist with an accounting and business consultancy firm in Red Deer. There, I learned more about farm finance and management."

Dargis loved her degree program. "I learned a great deal, made excellent industry contacts and got involved in extra-curricular activities that expanded my horizons."

After graduating, a personal tragedy gave Dargis an unexpected opportunity to become more intimately involved in her family's farm operation. When her parents were killed in an airplane crash in 2007, she moved home to help her sisters, one of whom was still in high school, and another of whom was running

the farm. She also works as marketing manager for the local John Deere dealership.

As a Next Generation delegate to the Royal Agricultural Societies of the Commonwealth, started by Prince Philip, Dargis has had the opportunity to travel abroad and learn from and serve farmers in other parts of the world. She spent three weeks studying farming in New Zealand and plans to travel to Papua, New Guinea in the future. Dargis also serves on the board of the Canadian Young Farmers Forum, a non-profit organization that fosters development and education for young farmers across the country.

Dargis has great faith in her future, knowing that her college education has given her the applied knowledge and advanced skills needed to make a contribution to Canada's agricultural industries. "Everything I learned at college makes me a more valuable employee and a better farmer."

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And even in an economic downturn, college grads are quickly snapped up, with many schools showing employment rates of 70 to 90 per cent within six months of graduation. One of the key reasons for the success of college grads is the close relationship colleges have with local business and industry leaders.

"The fundamental and distinctive feature of college education is a sharp focus on employment and partnering with local business representatives," says Jim Knight, President of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. "Colleges teach advanced skills, and with rapid changes in technology, the type of skills required shifts quickly. Every college keeps a close eye on trends and opportunities ahead of the curve so that when the environment changes we're ready for it."

A good case in point is Lethbridge College's Wind Turbine Technician program. Peter Leclaire, Academic Vice President of the Alberta-based school, describes how the program developed: "Five years ago we started to see an increasing number of wind turbines in our region. At first we were working with the wind companies providing training for those who were already employed. Then we researched what type of employees they would need in the long term. We learned that the industry needed people with both electrical and mechanical training, a hybrid that didn't yet exist. We sent two of our faculty to be trained to European Union standards, and we aligned our electrical and millwright curriculum so that students in either stream could work toward the wind turbine technician designation."

Toronto's Seneca College places 100 students from various programs in 3,500 workplaces each year. "The applied research our students do is very helpful to the small- and medium-sized business sector," says President David Agnew. "Our computer science students engage in research and development for the leaders in the field including Mozilla, Fedora and Eclipse. Many of our grads have been hired by these firms."

Seneca is constantly testing the market for emerging

skill sets. As just one example, the management of large buildings has changed significantly in the past five years. "We have a Centre for Built Environments where students learn the latest technological systems for managing large commercial and industrial buildings," says Agnew. "In the past, these employees needed mechanical skills, now most tasks can now be done remotely with web applications. Students learn on the latest equipment and they're hired upon graduation."

Public sector enterprises, like hospitals, also benefit from their relationships with colleges. Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton has responded to the latest developments in cardiac care with advanced skills training for nurses. Utilizing a distance education design that combines online instruction, videoconferencing and print formats, MacEwan's Cardiac Nursing Post-Basic Certificate program provides registered nurses with the specialty knowledge and expertise required to work with patients with or at risk of cardiac disease.

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) prides itself on being a school where students develop innovative and practical solutions for business. Delta Balance, a resident of NAIT's Centre for Innovation, worked with engineering technology students to design and prototype a new type of workstation. And the Edmonton Valley Zoo saved thousands of dollars annually when they implemented student-recommended changes to their lighting options. Invocon, a supplier of engine valves, was able to determine the best source for parts after NAIT computer science students created a software program that evaluated the relative cost of parts from around the world.

NAIT president Dr. Sam Shaw notes that engaging college students in business and industry gives Canada a competitive edge in a global economy. "There are so many examples of talented students making a meaningful contribution while in school and, of course, they help drive business productivity and innovation once they graduate. The college system is a huge advantage for Canada."

THE BACK PAGES

taste

Perfect coffee at home
R 208

tv

A new twist on 'Being Erica'
R 101

books

About these prize lists
R 112

help

Getting ready to go to school
R 105

stage

Getting ahead in the theatre
R 110

steyn

Old Ignatieff, new Ignatieff
R 120

'Chinatown' comes back to haunt him

With Roman Polanski's recent arrest, the 35th anniversary of his classic movie takes on a bizarre resonance **BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON**

film

If you've never seen Roman Polanski's *Chinatown*, and all I want is, be warned! But this post began with a spoiler. It's the famous scene in which Jake Gittes, the private eye played by Jack Nicholson, bullies the mysterious Evelyn Mulwray (Faye Dunaway) into revealing that she conceived her daughter with her father Danny's boss, portrayed by Nicholson's step—“She's my daughter... she's my sister”—as so Gittes they've become the stuff of parody. But the most striking moment occurs just after, when Gittes turns to her and says, “He raped you?” “No, he looks up at her, stricken by shame, then shakes his head, unable to answer.

This haunting exchange, which was not part of Robert Towne's original screenplay, drops the horror of a sexual crime with a creepy undertone of complicity. And that takes on a bizarre resonance in light of the current debate about rape, prostitution and Roman Polanski.

Three decades after Polanski fled America, convicted of having an affair with a 13-year-old girl, his past has caught up with him. After a month-long game of cat and mouse, the Los Angeles district attorney's office finally has him arrested and is sending extradition orders to Swiss Zurich, who asked him to get out of Zurich Airport as he

arrived to accept a lifetime achievement award from a film festival.

For the 76-year-old Oscar-winning filmmaker, the timing has a cruel irony. This week saw the release of a new DVD edition of *Chinatown*, marking the 35th anniversary of the movie that some consider Polanski's greatest achievement. With a plot that involves the sexual abuse of a teenage girl and a corrupt L.A. justice system, that movie now hits awfully close to home. Canadians about 50 in the 1970s, his marriage of conspiracy, murder and rape was grand old Hollywood on steroids that revolved around the corrupt William Mulholland, L.A.'s one-time czar of water and power. His crime is enshrined in Mulholland Drive, the wedding-movie metaphor road where Jack Nicholson lives—although the actor wasn't here; it was in his house that Polanski had sex with the young Susan Gailley on a March night in 1977 after playing her with champagne and Quaaludes, and photographing her nude in Jack's own dark mansion. “Worst and poorest movie!”

Now, 32 years later, it's as if the underground spirit of *Chinatown* has come back to haunt its maker, threatening to drag him back to Los Angeles. Polanski's predicament has become an international cause célèbre, and a new flashpoint in America's culture war. As French politicians jumped to condemn his arrest, a petition demanding his release drew

support from the likes of Martin Scorsese, David Lynch and Woody Allen (a daughter is under the circumstances, even if Allen didn't break the law by seducing Mrs. Perle's daughter). The petition has provoked a fierce backlash from those who argue that Polanski committed a despicable crime and deserves an equal treatment for being a celebrated filmmaker.

It's hardly an open-and-shut case. While we do debate and you tap into a quicksand of moral relativism as slippery as the plot of Polanski's masterpiece—“*Chinatown*” is really a place in the mind, where nothing is as it seems and everyone walks a fine line between innocence and guilt. But then, Polanski's crime and the movie both belong to a bygone era of Hollywood entitlement. Under the current studio system, no one could get away with making a mainstream picture as dark and complex as *Chinatown*, especially one that requires the star to wear a badge on his nose for half the movie. And in today's hyper-scrutinized world of celebrity culture, a famous director would never dream he could get away with drugging and raping an underage girl, even one who was “modeling” for him with her mother's permission.

Still, does he sit at the center of America's sexual sleaze, as the ultimate horror at the end of the movie, and a metaphor for the film's broader themes of violence and corruption? Just days before Polanski's arrest, I interviewed Towne—who won the sole Oscar among *Chinatown*'s 11 nominations—and he told me the story was inspired by his coverage of the environmental rape of his hometown, “Los Angeles, more than most cities,” he said, “seems to have always been a place where people never thought they would come to live but had to strike it rich and get out of there. It was a place to be mined, who their golden all, as fame and Hollywood. We made your bundle and got out regardless of the collateral damage that's done.”

Towne was referring to Polanski, but he could have been. The director was not of those

CAST of *Chinatown* (1974) (below), including (left) Faye Dunaway, John Huston, Jack Nicholson, (left) Polanski in 2008





NESPRESSO offers 12 popular espresso coffees (and three decaffeinated types) with a consistency by the strength of the brewer

How to make perfect coffee at home

A food critic spends a few happy weeks with a new espresso maker and its tasting box

BY JACOB REISLER • Earlier this year in Montreal a new cafe opened on Crescent Street (near Sherbrooke Street). This is itself a not especially exciting item, but then the Nespresso Boutique bar is no ordinary cafe—as you will know if you’ve ever dropped in on the two-story, six-story Nespresso Club alongside the Arcade Triplex or the Champ-Illyria, or close to home, the chic branch on Madison Avenue in Manhattan.

If you have not, this is what you need to know: In 1970, the Nestlé company’s R & D division did for espresso coffee exactly what they had done in 1910 for regular coffee: they standardised it, made it effortless, and while they were at it, dispensed with the mess pot, too. The trick of it was to vacuum-seal individual portions of coffee in special capsules designed for a purpose-specific machine. The system was patented in 1976, went to market in Europe a decade later, and now—just 20 odd years on—accounts for over 17 per cent of the espresso machines sold worldwide, and counting. And for all that the local onslaught is still recent: In Canada, its competitors have not as yet sold in 2005 (and the Nespresso bar in Montreal is only the third location to open in North America, after New York and Boston).

The first time I came across a Nespresso machine on this continent was upon rolling out of bed for the first time at the splendid Auberge St Antoine in Quebec City. Exploring the suite for the in-room coffee machine with a dread born of experience, I was shocked to find that in place of the usual cheap-trip machine with its pouch of entropic grinds, there was instead a Nespresso machine of the sort I had first encountered at a friend’s place in Montreal a decade previous. So I selected a capsule, pushed a button, and

prized a perfect, creamy-tasting espresso. Every good hotel should have them.

“The barista strongly recommends them,” general manager David Montez, whose Auberge is a member of the prestigious Relais & Châteaux, assured me. “The quality is undeniable. And the chambermaids love them—no mess.”

What works for the barista usually works for me, too. On the occasion, I’ve awoken with the chambermaids, too. For I have been living with a Nespresso Citi (just \$299) for a few happy weeks now, and have not had to wipe coffee grinds or oily spills or anything at all from the counter around the machine since. My suddenly neglected coffee-tilt, spewing Krieger beer glasses and fawcett espresso maker appear more and more irrelevant to me every passing day.

Of course, doing away with the mess would mean nothing if the coffee were not excellent, too. And the Nespresso does that and more, because—just as it, say, like me, you may prefer your 10-year-old French-pressed single roast in the afternoon, and reject the 10- or 15-year-old post-prandial blend—you can pay a different favour to the machine any time you like.

Obviously I am not talking about “minky goodness” and “peaches and cream” or what ever they’re peddling at Second Cup or Tim Hortons these days. Rather, I refer to the pre-

dictable precision by your basic Nespresso tasting box: 11 proper espresso coffees (and three decaffeinated types if you’re into that sort of thing) rated by strength of flavour. I lean to the strongest types—like Ristretto (strength 16), which has some bitter notes, and my favourite, Arpeggio (9), which has acid but having carefully sampled all, I can attest to uniform quality across the entire range.

Now, even if your home is equipped with a lovely \$2,800 all-in-one automated espresso machine by Jura of Switzerland, you cannot do about how you brew it. Not on the one you do so if you use your own bean grinder. The only way to manage it is to produce your coffee per ground, and load your machine from a different bag when the urge arises—although that the machine not grow stale since you last dropped in. And this virtue of flexibility, combined with its negligible capsule wastage, is a huge factor in Nespresso’s success.

The online ordering club for the standard lineup of “grand cru” and a selection of featured specials (like the current “sugarcane,” sourced just in time from Surinam) is nicely sophisticated along with their vendor’s style, serving as a handy setting for the Nespresso Boutique bar in Montreal—or you can save yourself the trip, pick up a machine (the big sells there in Vancouver and Toronto), join the club, and make your own perfect coffee at home with roughly the same skill set as is required to make a nice plate of food. **W**



TODAY'S SPECIAL... RAMEN NOODLE CHOCOLATE
Chocolate and wine is a classic combination, but what about the work stuff with ramen noodles? Konfetti Chocolate is now selling chocolate bars in all sorts of unusual flavours, including and tortilla (made with crispy tortilla), lime and sea salt and French toast (with sensory bits of the real thing), to name a few. The chocolate is then-work chocolate flavoured with “crunchy, earthy ramen noodles.” This could be the ultimate late-night snack.

PHOTOGRAPH BY M. HARRIS

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THIS SEASON Erica (Erin Karpik) travels into the past to help others, including her mysterious therapist Dr. Tom (Michael Riley)

The story behind the new Erica

When the CBC's 'Being Erica' came back this season, its heroine had changed quite a bit

BY JAIMIE J. MEINIKAN • It used to be hard to find a TV show that didn't follow a trope formula, but now it's getting harder to find one that does. *Being Erica* (airing on the CBC Tuesdays at 9 p.m.) began last year as a fantasy-comedy drama in which the depressed, lonely wife character (Erin Karpik) goes to a repressive therapist, Dr. Tom (Michael Riley), who sends her back in time to learn from her past mistakes. But when it returned for a second season last month, Erica was no longer lonely or depressed, and she spent the season primarily helping Dr. Tom instead of the other way round. Just saying, who created *Being Erica*, says that her heroine has changed so much that "the way she acted in the first episode of season two was quite an evolution. She would have needed quite different early in the pilot." Today's Erica doesn't wait until late in the day to make changes, writers want to create a world and then, as Snyder puts it, "shape the world up a little bit."

The original concept of the show was that Erica was unemployed and had a tough and unromantic life, but now she has a good job and a steady boyfriend. The early episodes had her finding out why her life turned out so badly. Now she's learning how to improve her unenviable present life, or helping others solve their problems. Aaron Martin, who executive produces the show with Snyder, explains that this season will be "focusing more on secondary characters and their role in Erica's life."

The writers have also changed the pace traveled from a cat-in-the-hat to something resembling a larger story arc. The new season has a plot line about Erica meeting a fellow time traveler, and more hints about who Dr. Tom is and why he's sending people on time

travel adventures, including new poetry for our idea. "It's not saying that he's dead," Snyder says, but they're leaving open the "ambiguous" possibility that he might be a ghost. Though Snyder says the show is still primarily a comedy drama and that they don't want to make it too "magical," there are moments in the new episodes that feel like a Toronto version of *Lost*.

This isn't what we traditionally expect from chick-lit or light fantasy TV, let alone a combination of the two like *Erica*. Earlier comic travel shows, like the *Star Trek: Voyager* and *Quantum Leap*, stuck to the same premise and characterizations for as long as possible. Today, almost every drama show is expected to make changes long before actors leave to manage drops. That's true not only of travel and shows like *Lost* and *24*, but shows like *Being Erica* that focus on self-empowerment as every episode. *House* has more or less become plot every week, but it began to season seven by having the character check into a mental institution and kick (for now) his drug addiction. Even the CBS shows throw in little story arcs about the changing personal lives of the characters. You can watch these shows without having seen previous episodes, but they throw in what Martin calls "soundtracking for the dedicated viewer."

Why do TV producers feel a need to shake

things up? Partly it's a matter of marketing: the shows they advertise. Snyder and Martin are fans of *Baywatch* and *Grey's Anatomy*, where, Martin says, "they were always keeping each episode a medical an. That's the kind of structure we like to go for" but it's also about what the viewers demand. Martin recalls that when he worked on *Diagnosis: The Next Generation*, fans got angry when the show failed to address things that happened the week before. "I remember viewers on the message boards saying, 'What happened? How come we don't see him this episode?'" Snyder agrees that if Erica leaves a season, fans don't want to see her go back to being as perfect as the original was. "It doesn't make any sense to us to have a go back to square one. It feels like we'd be shaking our audience."

Of course, shows can't stay too far from their basic formula, or they'll lose viewers. *Being Erica*'s season premiere ended a look at the show might abandon the old format, but the next episode was a conventional story where Erica helped a past agent, the show won't give up on that kind of story any more than *House* will give up on medical mysteries. Still, Snyder promises that this season will tell more "formula-breaking stories" where they stray from the old style to "do something unexpected and different." Welcome to the new world of TV, where we raise an eyebrow, we no longer know what to expect. Except that the main character will learn a valuable lesson about relationships. ■

ACCORDING TO TV SARAH PALIN'S NEW BOOK

Palin's 400-page memoir is set to be released on Nov. 11 and it's called *Going Rogue: An American Life*. And critics say that it starts out strong. It gets really exciting and then confusing, and then the last 300 pages are boring. —Jennifer Nelson
"This book has got a lot of beautiful color photos that Sarah has taken from her front porch—beautiful pictures of houses that she took from her front porch." —David Letterman





WITHOUT Alice Munro and the celebration of Margaret Atwood's *The Year of the Flood*, the winner of this year's Giller is anyone's guess.

Not all eyes are on the Prizes

The reality of book awards is a crapshoot, but the crapshoot matters less and less

BY NOAH RICHLER • Gill Adams' *The Outlander*, Joseph Boyden's *Three Day Road*, Steven Galloway's *The Culture of Politics*, Lisa Simpson's *The Book of Negroes*, Gary Vanderhaeghe's *The Last Crossing*, Atwood's *The Year of the Flood*, Yann Martel's *The Life of Pi*, and, this year, Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*—a litany of some of the best (and best-selling) Canadian novels of the last several years—but not one of them shortlisted for the prize! (Duh.)

Amused we mean about these five—Kim Edlin's *The Disappearance*, Annabel Lyon's *The Golden Mean*, Linden MacLean's *The English Man*, Colin McLean's *Fish*, and Anne Michaels's *The Winter Man*—and, if you're into the game of it, whose choices they might be: Linden MacLean? An Alas MacLean pick, surely. Anne Michaels? Victoria Ginzburg, chair of the Booker branch that gave Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* half the prize, after he had bagged her flowing prose, no? And Ben Elton's *Camelot*—nappi-well, isn't Russell Banks a fan of the Caribbean and other writers, politically charged places and who, tell me, is the one who saves for MacLean's *Midwinters* and translated them dialogue?

The point of a list is to get people talking, and this year, the Scotiabank Giller Prize has succeeded. Last year, the Giller was not much discussed at all, but now the prize is getting international attention too, something founder Jack Robinson has been seeking for a while. Last month, I discussed the controversy of this year's long list on the BBC World Service's *Newsweek* with Victoria Ginzburg—the English judge on the prize's five- or six- or international jury. "Last December," the BBC host, described the Giller as "the

top prize in Canada," praise that may well stick that hands over at the Governor General's Literary Awards.

Well, to its credit, it was the CBC and not, coincidentally, the CBC (who being a Canadian competitor, after all), that understood the spirit of such debate and had Ginzburg and I face off deeply. What with the domestic use of all media by just a few generally celebrity-driven topics, it is good news when opportunities are found to discuss books, and to be able to mention ones that are not listed by the Giller Prize or the Writers' Trust or, next week, the Governor General's Literary Awards. (Doubt, an Acadia and one of the BBC's stars, began the show by singing out Lisa Moore's recent *Alibi* as "terrific.")

This book season, lively already started with Alice Munro's publisher's announcement that the two-time winner—and winner of the International Man Booker Prize—had withdrawn from the Scotiabank Giller, added ones that was not without comment, and that did not completely ignore the younger writers who want to make way for. She still has been nominated for the Writers' Trust award and is likely to be on the Governor General's fiction list. Why did she not withdraw from all of the year's fiction prizes?

Without Munro, and now the surprise omission of Margaret Atwood's *Year of the Flood*, the Giller field is wide open. A long list dominated by women has become evenly spread, and the independent

House of Commons identified as flourishing because of a grant system that said was "the way of the world" have been opened out, ending a good man and leaving the prize to be decided by either Prigun Group (Canada's largest Harnish Hamilton, London, House of Commons or McMillan & Stewart).

The reality of prize is still, in most, a crapshoot. But here is the good news: the crapshoot matters less and less. Canada is now a mature literary nation whose reviews are still read and play their part, but commercial success is no longer dominated by winning prizes. Lindsay Barclay has been making star in home because of his best-selling status in the United Kingdom. Gill Adams' *The Outlander*, having sold upwards of 70,000 copies in the United States, has been reported as a move by Union Pacific, a Canadian company, in conjunction with *Truth* by Tyler Koppa, a British company that produced the critically acclaimed *Mean*. (Tyler, some of you will know, is married to the musician Sting.) Of *Lawrence Sanders* and *The Book of Negroes* and its surrounding triumphal word of mouth, we need not speak.

So enjoy the Canadian prize season, it's good fun. But have a look at the books that did not make the list. As this year has proved again, you are likely to find some of the year's best writing there. Be your own judge. ■



FINALLY, A BOOK ABOUT... BURMA'S DICTATORSHIP
Karen Casey won the Orange Broadbent Prize for *The Last Cape*, her novel about a Burmese political prisoner, and the Governor General's Award for her non-fiction book about Thailand, *Touch the Dragon*. Now she returns to Myanmar with the non-fiction *Burmese Unsettled* (Random House). It's a poetic, keen story with all the strengths of her previous works, a tale of a wounded country and a gifted political activist struggling to heal it.

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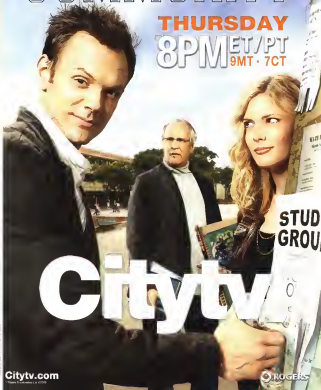


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ROGERS

BIOLOGY CLASS

THE ADVICE: "I don't advocate becoming a home-schooler in the common misusage [use of the word]—it's lame, cut off from the world."

University without high school

This alternative-education advice (including how to get parents onside) is aimed at teens

BY JILLIA MCKENZIE • "Choosing to leave [high] school as an entrepreneur and move, not drop-out," is the message of a new book aimed at teens, *College Without High School: The Author, Mike Miller, the co-founder of Unschool Adventures*, warns. "Life's not a personal with doctors, lawyers and professors on the way, McDonald's cafeteria in the basement school, the only ladder between."

What does a high schooler "who chooses away at meaningless disconnected problems every night because in later life" he/she "becomes an adult who chooses away at a job she doesn't enjoy, for less money than she deserves, for time with vacation through which she would prefer to sleep?" Miller's book offers teens step-by-step advice on how to drop out of high school to tag team through in Co-op, Kites or teach basic computer skills in Tanzania. It also shows how to convince schoolwork to meet admission requirements for university later on.

Miller studies anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, but left after being an "unofficial wild-quester mechanic." A book by New York high school teacher John Gatto inspired him to rethink his path. "I've worked a fascinating phenomenon in my 25 years of teaching," wrote Gatto, and that was "what schools and schooling are: incredibly irrelevant to the great outdoors of the planet. The truth is that schools don't really teach anything except how to obey orders."

"Totally leave school," the quickest, easiest route to freedom is to become a home-schooler," writes Miller. However, "I don't advocate becoming a home-schooler in the common misusage of the word. I don't want you to stay home all day, following the prescribed 18th grade curriculum and cut

yourself off from the world."

Instead of wasting time in a classroom, shuffling around hallways, Miller believes that students' material can be learned in a fraction of the time through online courses, tutors, or making classes. "Common teaching is to give yourself plenty of time to learn to export and talk down. Forget common sense in this case. To tackle a big project, begin by giving yourself an unrealistically small time frame," he suggests students keep their schoolwork hours to a minimum. "If you can learn there story in eight weeks at eight hours per week instead of 30 weeks at eight hours per week, do it. A short deadline is superior to a long one because it has the psychological effect of making you do more work. This is Miller's law: work expands to fill the time available for its completion."

Do an internship with a small business, he suggests, the book even includes a script to follow when calling a business owner. "Hi, my name is... I would like to talk with you and I want to help. There are a few specific things I want to learn but my first priority is assisting your business in any way I can."

Without State University student Jenny Brown dropped out of high school in the sixth grade to pursue her interest in ornithology. Miller reports that Jenny became an online biologist in parrot forums, critiqued

as 100 volunteer and then moved for three years at an exotic animal veterinary clinic. In 2006, "high little more than a handwritten unschooling transcript and ACT scores, Jenny applied to and entered White State as a pre-veterinary biology major."

For other "home-schoolers" who want to go to university, Miller's advice calling earlier graduate schoolwork and taking if the school has any specific admission requirements or advice for home-schooling students. "Be sure to track your progress with documentation. In the language of college admissions, if it's not on paper, it didn't happen."

At the University of Toronto, for instance, home-school students are welcomed, though they are recommended to "consult with us well in advance since an individual assessment of your qualifications will be necessary." U of T does not require a high school diploma but does want to see records of standardized tests such as SAT and 11.

"Unschoolers aren't immune to laziness," Miller writes. "They're natural time-wasters, assigned without a plan for their future, thus caught in a vicious cycle."

For getting parents onside, Miller says he tells them to find their local unschooling parents. "Steering at least one well-lit unschooling parent finally helps parents for whom the concept is scary. There are definitely Canadian teen leaders I know all of them in the Vancouver area. Join a Facebook unschooling group and ask around." ■



MOST IMPROVED FLAKA FLAY

After Flay, of the no-regrets Public Enemy, hasn't had much in the way of education, he dropped out of school in Grade 10. But now, the star will return to high school and earn a diploma—all as part of a new reality show. "I just want to show the world it's never too late to get your diploma," Flay explained. "Everybody sees me as this big low idiot. Now I got a baby girl, I've been there and done that and now it's time for the next episode."

SUPER SKILL: It's now comedy show about Quebec, was born out of the recent debate in the province over "bicultural accommodation"

So, a Quebecer walks into a bar...

Jokes about the Québécois being dumb and inbred are all part of Samir Khullar's shtick

BY MARTIN PATRICK • For his first-ever show in front of a French Canadian audience this past July, Montreal comedian Samir Khullar started off with a joke about how a non-immigrant portion of Quebecers are the product of incest. Then he segued into a dirty joke about incest. "There's two ways of Quebecers for me. There's those who are educated, outward and well brought up. Then there are those who voted 'yes'—and raised that in a separate Quebec, he says, was born out of the recent debate over "bicultural accommodations," a government-sponsored travelling gag show where Quebecers voiced sometimes shocking sentiments about immigration.

Behind his jokes about silly superstitions and pervasive *je ne sais*, he says, is a loud truth: no matter how much they might try, immigrants will forever be considered less than me. "We will employ here to 'check the mail once a month to see if the welfare cheque came.'"

For Khullar, who grew up in Saginaw, the stereotypes stemming from Quebec are a little late in coming. He's already considered an up-and-coming comedy act outside the province. The 33-year-old "Saggy"—the name is a holdover from his days as a party promoter at McGill University—has played his own HBO special, which began airing in July, around 300 open acts, and opened for the likes of Dave Chappelle and Darryl Wiggins. He performed 100 shows this year, and the *Hallywood Reporter* recently named him one of the rising comedy stars from around the world. Yet, he is jokingly admonished the supposedly inbred, closed-minded ways of Quebecers—as *franglais*, New York-

likely wouldn't have been recognized on the streets of the very province where he grew up.

A self-described "child of 9/11," Khullar is the eldest of three children born to first-generation Indian immigrants. Local children of immigrants, he was forced to attend French school, which he did in the immigrant-rich district of Côte des Neiges in Montreal, and he speaks fluent French as a result. His show about Quebec, he says, was born out of the recent debate over "bicultural accommodations," a government-sponsored travelling gag show where Quebecers voiced sometimes shocking sentiments about immigration.

Behind his jokes about silly superstitions and pervasive *je ne sais*, he says, is a loud truth: no matter how much they might try, immigrants will forever be considered less than me. "We will employ here to 'check the mail once a month to see if the welfare cheque came.'"

At the same time, Khullar keeps pride in Quebec, and Montreal in particular, being big, modern, safe and edgy industries, perhaps

despite itself. When referring to Quebecers he is as likely to use "we" as "they." He has kind things to say about full-on and onetime Quebec's English population for its acceptance of its Quebecois—the very people that are beginning to laugh at his jokes.

In short, he seems as conflicted as your average thirteenth-century Montrealer who chooses out of Indian immigrants (who, by the way, still live with his parents). "It's a constant tug of war," he says. "That's the struggle I'm in. It's 'we' when everything is going well, but I become a 'they' when it's not going so well."

Curiously, things are going well for Khullar beyond Quebec. His shtick—a frankly personal, equal opportunity mad take-up in a French T-shirt and other bluster—plays incredibly well, even in languages other than English and French. He recently completed a tour of India, where he performed in Punjab and Haryana (Jokes about oral sex apparently play well in these languages, too.) It splits his time between Montreal and Los Angeles, where there are numerous of television offers. "I want to be a global brand," he says, nonchalantly as he can be.

Khullar's infectious no-matter-what-on-Quebecers will be here this month on TVA, the province's highest-rated channel. Then he will find out if Quebecers can really take a joke. Khullar is confident they're it. That "je ne sais" he says during his bit, "The making fun of you, but at least it's in French." ■



PERFORMANCE OF THE WEEK: SINGING

People planning to see Hugh Jackman and Daniel Craig's Broadway play, *A Steady Dime*, should consider turning their cell phones to vibrate. When an audience member's phone kept ringing during a performance, Jackman, still in character as Deniro, a tough Chicago cop, shouted, "You want to get out? You want to get out? Get out! I don't care." When the offender finally silenced the phone, Craig responded, "You got it? All right. Deniro took it hard."

MARK
STEYN

Thinking about the old Ignatieff

Speaking of free speech, Steyn speculates about what the Liberal leader can't say now

MARK STEYN In *Stewie*, on Monday, I kept it thingy weird—rocking by these crazy puns on William S. Burroughs—what? Stevie song! Michael! I guess I should sing: Oh, come on, you don't really need a professional for this, do you? Help! *Monday*! (All my troubles seemed so far away) The Fall On The Hill Hello Goodbye Get Back (on Howard) and a little John Deere boogie.

I wasn't really in the mood to pile on gay pornstars. I was in town to testify at the House of Commons Select Committee on Justice and Human Rights about the Canadian "Harmful Rights" Commission's report on individual liberty and freedom of expression. And, mainly because I've been talking about this subject for a couple of years now and have pretty much exhausted my stock of free-speech quotations from Milton to Salman Rushdie, just for variety's sake I decided to use the Michael Ignatieff of the Committee. I'm talking about the assertion by Chief Justice Jean Luc L'Heureux, Canada's constitutional nontheologian, that there is "no history of rights" only "a reason" in which "freedom of expression" has to be "balanced" by models group rights and collective rights. And I responded with a blast of Professor Ignatieff.

"Collective rights without individual ones end up in tyranny. Moreover, rights without the tendency to define anything desirable as a right—ends up eroding the legitimacy of a defensible use of rights. The right to freedom of speech is not, as the Marxist tradition maintained, a lip-slip bourgeois luxury, but the precondition for having any other rights at all."

Bengal in my hands with the "human rights" collectors, I am an ignominious—okay that's a bit unyielding, but I'm certainly an egghead. As I told the Select Committee, support the Lyndon B position—on freedom of speech, on individual vs. collective rights, and on the way "rights activists" damage the core of real rights.

of the world's most famous and best-loved people. I wish I could say to myself that that all the time. Now that's so much. At least not to the point of pushing the fellow Liberal Keith Martin on calling for the repeal of Section 13, the regrettably crafted "hate speech" law even more aptly interpreted by the Canadian "Human Rights" Commission. But throughout the '60s and '70s you could speak on the BBC almost any night of the week and end a dark shamed no-less grief-fuelled deep in fumed-up conversation about

One day, and perhaps sooner than he thinks, he'll be back at an Ivy League college or a public broadcasting station and free to start seeing and writing again, like that all-over again.

Not that I've got anything against the Liberals. In the spirit of my free speech comrade Ezra Levant, who's developing a nice line in voter turnout stickers, I was pleasantly surprised by the opposition questions from the opposition. The Liberal members retreated immediately to a discussion of the Conservative

Code position: The Waqoqeen, who seemed hitherto unaware of the issues, had some sharp procedural and constitutional questions. The Dopees, after listening to our explanations of Canada's "business rights" reforms, were joining Naac organizations, attempting to hold secret trials and imposing fifth amendment speech bans, asked to be sent the underlying documentation and engaged in war crimes suits: ourselves available for further assistance. Not one member attempted to make a principled case for Sections 23 or even a low, unprincipled, invertebrate political case. Whenever it turned out, nobody is prepared to say a good word for that law in public.

Nonetheless, I would love to have heard somebody other than you actually deliver the Ignorance Line: the right to freedom of speech is the compensation for having a set of nerves.

I assume they were Muslim women and not fellow MPs preferring to go incognito

at all. That's a classically small liberal position, so it would be nice to hear a big-L Liberal take it. My only contact with the Leader of the Opposition was a long ago dinner party, but I would bet deep down in the darkest recesses of his soul where the spinners and managers don't penetrate, he feels exactly the same way on free speech and human rights that he always did.

He just can't say it. Which is kind of a sad comment on Michael Ignatieff's own freedom of speech, and the shrinking of Canadian political discourse.

At least one of my Median colleagues reckoned that Ezra Levant and I blew it in Ottawa, but I felt we made modest incremental progress. There was a spring in my gel as I left Parliament, and then I thought about

BUT WHAT if Layton turns up to the Eid breakfast in his outfit for the Gag Ride parade?

[illegible]

As for us one can tell, Mr. Layton is not celebrating a Muslim, he just plays one at his. Maybe next year he could grow out his beard and team up with the fall Islamists. Given that he's a secular leftist, I doubt he could sack him for a week. But nonetheless he feels it's entirely natural for him to go around "thanking Allah" as "we" celebrate the end of Ramadan. Believe Me A Day.

Torin Platt's National Post colleague John Clark kept noting the curious evolution of Jack Layton's NDP on the one hand, as more candidates who support gay marriage, on the other, as transsexuals who foster the introduction of sharia. This is the principal model of philosopher Gyreffe's writings on "tolerance rights." An effective political leader (if you'll forgive me applying the designation to the head honcho of the NDP) reflects great areas of agreed diversity groups and presents his party as the smoothest medium for between these opposing collectivities. And for the moment, at least as he doesn't get confused and turn up to the till blunder in his outfit for the Gay Pride parade, he can't not show up all in

[illegible]

In Canada, I feel our campaign since last year has made some modest progress on the restoration of lost liberties. But one small step forward for this northern Dominion, and a whole bunch of backward stumbles elsewhere. Under President Obama, the United States has now joined the UN Human Rights Council, an entirely fraudulent body which protects the world's thugs and on which the Organisation of the Islamic Conference dominates.

8	GENERATION A by Douglas Coupland	4-00
9	THE GIRL WHO PLAYED WITH FIRE by Sarah Linton	8-00
10	LOVE AND SUMMER by William S. Burroughs	10-00

New-Books

1	THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH	By Richard Brauer	0.00
2	EMPIRE OF ILLUSION	By Chris Hedges	1.00
3	THE CASE FOR GOD	By Karen Armstrong	4.00
4	TRUE CRIMINALS	By Edward Kennedy	2.00
5	GREEN METROPOLIS	By David Owen	1.00
6	OUTLIERS	By Malcolm Gladwell	3.00
7	LANCASHIRE	By Lisa McInerney	1.00
8	THE CLINTON TAPE	By Taylor Branch	1.00
9	THE CELLO WINTER	By Eric Simon	10.00
10	THE BOY IN THE MOON		2.00

LAST WEEK DROPS 0.9 UNIT

ON THE WEB: For book reviews, feature articles, interviews and recommended reading by contributors, check out our new Books Page at musicfans.ew.com

But overlooking people that "cannot act as an object of racial or religious discrimination"—a subject, a planetary group-defection law to match Islam from genuine collective rights on a global scale, and is the root of individual ones. The U.S., as part of its outreach to the Muslim world, has decided to go along with that after weeks of negotiations with that well-known human rights bison, Egypt. "Tens of thousands of expressions," said William Bader, the Egyptian ambassador, "has sometimes been raised."

Indeed, the good news is such "massive" news is unlikely to be much of a problem in the future. The free world is coexisting, *gras pri-*

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IT'S A FEELING, hardly to see some progress in the almost decade-long project that has been the "humiliating" of Stephen Harper

He looks so human. Encore, encore!

One small step for Stephen Harper, one giant leap for the political strategist in us all



SCOTT FESSENDEN

Ensemble thought was, Stephen Harper's performance of a Beatles song at a city Ottawa gala may wind up being another in the long list of things that will make him a legend. It would be the point that all future political analysts will require, in a maximum, a pair of hip huggers with tape around a "surprise" appearance during Diego Night on So You Think You Can Dance. He warned: even as you read these words, Jack Layton is grooving his chest hair and shrugging, "Right four beats, left four beats—and then I'm open my required blouse."

The "humanization" of Stephen Harper has been almost a decade in the making, and finally it's useful to finally see some progress. There have been so many failures along the way—when he hired that lady to pick out his list, when he sent his back to school with a firm handshake, when he publicly devoured the flesh of the week (in paragraph). No matter how many times he decided to write a book about history, he just couldn't connect with the common man.

But the efforts of the Prime Minister and his crack team of strategists at Conservative Labs continued. They tried the recent test. They tried photos with babies (Mr. Harper kept negotiating to give the car a keychain). He'd instinctively strive to buy that votes with billions in beauty centers and spas. During the last campaign, Harper ended every sleepless night of a woman, approaching the microphone and saying his first words to someone: "Thanks for coming—I baked muffins." Nothing worked.

But then came the Piano Man's surprise rendition of "With a Little Help from My

Friends, complete with a backup band and YoYo Ma plucking the strings of his cello in support. The crowd at the National Arts Centre, many in fancy pastel designer attire for one of the capital's big annual galas, were wild. (Press Row 1, I could see grown women jumping up and down, shrieking, "Encore! Encore!") As the number ended, a hush came very quickly. "That was great. I'm going to take me a few days to remember why I hate the guy."

It seems as if the Harper cause and the conversion were anything. People weren't worshipping at Harper's worship or humanity. They were marveling at how effect they had portrayed himself as warm and human. They appreciated the performance more as a flexing gesture of the little Stephen Harper. They appreciated it as a strategic coup—a moment that would cost all those ordinary voters their vote into believing (but not us, because we're so savvy) that Harper is one of them, an average Joe, a Bob from all, etc. The media picked up the theme—we declared it brilliant because we believed ordinary voters would rejoice in the face of Harper's Kingliness.

But are there any "ordinary voters" left? In their strange way, voters have a political appearance no matter how allegorically spontaneous or sincere—as anything, other than the combined effort of a dozen communications advisers, a press officer and a PR firm. Harper's cue, a pro-theater, and?

We're all political strategists now, conditioned by the media and the parties themselves to interpret everything through the prism of tactics and positioning. Everyone knows Jack Layton is avoiding an election that he'll because his party is about as popular as

certain strains of salmonella. No one is both and that is precisely the reason. Their focus is whether his little bit—we're doing it for the unemployed people of Canada—is likely to play well strategically (Spencer alert: no).

In 2008, the Prime Minister explained a National Arts Centre gala for personal political gain by declaring that the gala was attended by rich women who are not to be working Canadians. Exactly a year later, the Piano Man was exploring the very same NAC gala for personal political gain by playing merely for the music.

In 1995, Harper was launching a war on culture, portraying artists as leeches and asserting to deny tax credit to them that include any "social concerns" that lack an educational purpose. (Under terms of this legislation, the barely seen in David Cronenberg's Coast would have had to feature a subplot about the importance of regular oil changes to extending the life of your car's engine.) A year later, he was holding YoYo Ma's hand in the air and bowing to the \$10,000-a-table crowd.

In this hypocrisy? Sure. But we've all built up pretty good immunity to hypocrisy. What we can't get enough of is the Game—who's up, who's down, what the latest poll says, what the strategists are strategizing, and what we do in their place. We do make (you must decide). We'll have Jack's moments. We'll praise Jack's moments (the clips on Iggy We don't usually believe Stephen Harper has changed, because very smart, grown-up artists or evolved as a leader. But we admire him for being smart enough to make it look as though he has.

Sing as a song, Piano Man. Mr. Harper's got us feeling all right. ■

ON THE WEB: To read Fessenden on the famous artist his blog maclean.ca/fechuck

MICHAEL MARIK JOK

1992-2005

He was born amid the bloody chaos of Sudan's civil war. His Dinka name means 'disaster.'

Michael Marik Jok was born Feb. 12, 1992, in Kapoeta, a southern Sudan. He was the third child of Elizabeth Makh and Jok Tal, both rebel soldiers who rose in Eritrea, where they trained with the Sudan People's Liberation Army. Marik is the Dinka word for "disaster," Michael, as he was later known, was born amid the country's recent civil war, which pitted the northern Muslim government against the mostly Christian south, and ultimately claimed two million lives, one of the last century's most brutal wars.

Kapoeta, the crowded, delictio capital of the rebel-controlled south, was a shell of a town. The hospital, school and many buildings had been flattened by bombs. Food was scarce; most people survived on three kilograms of rice per week. Disease and malnutrition were rampant. Digging for water could take an hour. Elizabeth and Jok, who moved seven feet off level ground, walked barefoot according to custom. Jok's children took their name as their surname.

Shortly after Marik was born, Jok was shot by government forces. Tal, his elder, watched him die. They barely had time to mourn, on May 28, 1992, Kapoeta was taken in a surprise attack. The chaotic evacuation took place amid indiscriminate shelling and gunfire. "You couldn't locate your kids, your husband, your wife," says Jaly Ayuen, now a priest at Emmanuel Mission, Winnipeg's

Southern Christian church, who was then living in Kapoeta. "People just ran." With Marik on her back, Elizabeth, her daughter Nyan and Tal walked south to Kerya, a three-week trip.

They landed in the notorious Bakasat refugee camp, a dusty oil lemons of white tents in an area surrounded by barbed wire. At night, gunfire would ring out. "Somebody rob people, sometimes they rape people, sometimes they kill people," says Jaly. They were "many, many people, and not enough food," adds Marik. Marik, Marik's uncle, Elizabeth, a fiercely protective mother, knew they had to leave. When Marik was three, they transferred to Ila, a Sudan refugee camp in Darfur. Kerya, a mosque Elizabeth hoped would be temporary. They stayed eight years. On life's bare dry earth, Marik, Marik named a nephew as a joke, and led the way as Sunday services in a makeshift church. By then, Jok's cousin, James Nuk, was living with Elizabeth, according to custom (they would

add five more children to the family). Yet life at the squalid Muslim-majority camp wasn't much easier. In the pecking order for scarce resources, the only Sudanese majority was near the bottom.

They left all that behind when, on Dec. 2, 2001, they flew to Canada, they'd been selected by the UN for resettlement in refugee camps. In Darfur, the war-torn town around 18° C. It dropped to -15 the day the family arrived in Winnipeg. Kate Köhler, a friend, remembers

meeting the Joks. "She's big, tall young man stuck in a tiny space suit," she says. "They were so warm, so appreciative of the small ex thing"—including their "quite scary" apartment complex in Winnipeg's inner-city North End. Marik, who was shy, but with a big, crooked smile, soon began Grade 7. He spoke Dinka, Arabic and English, but his English was limited and his schooling had been haphazard. It was a struggle. He played with basketball and an agent personality—which doesn't translate successfully into reading. He finally found Gayle. Don't worry with a grim chuckle. But he quickly learned to communicate. "He was sharp as a tack."

Two years ago the family moved to a duplex in the working-class suburb of Thornhill, a suburb up. Marik, already six feet two, was a fixture at the downtown YMCA, where he played basketball. At home he was the quiet diplomat, adept at defusing the little fights that inevitably flare up among siblings (as for Marik, the only thing he ever fought for was his spot on the couch). But at school he was in Miles Macdonell Collegiate, which offers the city's top program in English as an additional language. Two of his younger siblings, meanwhile, had been recruited to a private Catholic school. Finally, Elizabeth could relax. She no longer worried about "what her kids would do or when they would sleep," says Jaly. The violence of Sudan and the camp could fade to memory.

On Sept. 6, two days before he was to begin Grade 12, Marik and four friends—three girls and another boy—were walking in the city's West End when a car pulled up beside them. Someone yelled at the girls. In an act of bravado, Marik stepped forward to the car. The door flew open and the two boys were armed and snatched Marik, who was left bleeding against a Young Street building, later died of his injuries. He was 17.

BY RANCY MACDONALD

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